

THE PSALTER
A NEW ARRANGEMENT
FOR RESPONSIVE READING

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CHAPLAIN (AUS)

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THE PSALTER:

A

NEW ARRANGEMENT

FOR

RESPONSIVE READING

together with an introduction

and explanatory notes



ELDON W. BORELL
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April 1944

CHAPTER I
THE OLD TESTAMENT

Many manuscripts have been written on the Pentateuch, but none have been so far as the Hebrew text is concerned, which have been published. The Pentateuch is the foundation of the Jewish religion, and its study is of the highest importance. The Pentateuch is the basis of the Jewish law, and its study is of the highest importance. The Pentateuch is the basis of the Jewish law, and its study is of the highest importance. The Pentateuch is the basis of the Jewish law, and its study is of the highest importance.

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements

for the Degree of
Bachelor of Divinity

- The Authorized Version
- The Revised Version
- The Septuagint
- The Samaritan Pentateuch
- The Syriac Version
- The Arabic Version
- The Ethiopic Version
- The Persian Version
- The Hebrew Version
- The Arabic Version
- The Persian Version
- The Ethiopic Version
- The Hebrew Version

Dr. Gaster's translation (1767) is the most recent, and is based on the following text and version, as given by the following order of departments:

1. Samaritan Pentateuch - the original Hebrew text, which is the basis of the Samaritan Pentateuch.
2. Septuagint (Greek) - used by the Samaritans for the translation of the Samaritan Pentateuch.
3. Other Greek versions:
 - (a) Syriac
 - (b) Arabic
 - (c) Persian

CHAPTER I

AIM AND METHOD

Many commentaries have been written on the Psalms; many translations have been made; much has been written on Hebrew psalmody; books have even been published treating of the parallelism in the Psalter and showing which verse-members are parallel; writers have suggested that responsive reading of the Psalter would be enriched by arrangements in which the parts read by the congregation parallel those read by the minister; but, to this writer's knowledge, such an arrangement, with parts for the minister and congregation clearly marked, has not yet been made readily accessible to our worshipping congregations. To meet such a need, this effort is humbly proffered.

In preparing this arrangement I have had constantly before me the following translations:

- The Authorized Version
- The Prayer Book Version
- The translation of the Jewish Publication Society of America
- The Complete Bible: An American Translation (J. M. Powis Smith, translator of the Psalms)
- Moffatt's translation
- Dr. W. O. E. Oesterley's translation

Dr. Oesterley's translation (on which I have leaned very heavily) is, in turn, based on the following texts and versions, on which he has relied in the following order of importance:

1. Masoretic text - the official Hebrew text handed down through ancient Palestinian tradition.
2. Septuagint (Greek) - used by him especially for restoration of doubtful passages.
3. Other Greek versions:
 - (a) Aquila
 - (b) Symmachus
 - (c) Theodotion

4. Peshitta (Syriac version)
5. Vulgate (Latin)

Each and every psalm I have studied carefully in all these translations. In the case of each psalm I have selected the rendition which best preserved the parallelism and metre. In a liberal proportion of the psalms I have had recourse to several translations; that is, in different portions of the psalm I have used different translations, finding that here one rendition best brought out the parallelism, there another. Other things being equal, I have preferred the use of the Authorized Version or the Prayer Book version, on the ground that their wording is more familiar to the rank and file of readers. However, I have departed from these quite freely when considerations of parallelism and metre seemed to commend it; likewise, when obviously greater clarity of thought resulted therefrom. Throughout, the paramount consideration has been: What wording does greatest justice to the rhythm, metre, and parallelism, and least violence to the text?

In parts of some of the psalms the translations differ widely. Whenever possible I have sought to secure the substantial agreement of at least two translators. In a few cases, where each translation was quite different from every one of the others, and where the commentators frankly confessed that the text was so corrupt that the accurate translation was purely conjectural, I have, out of poetic considerations, given a rendition slightly different from that of any of these translations - though in all such cases I have made sure that the meaning of the disputed passage was authenticated by at least one biblical authority.

The Psalter has had a long history, many copyists, much readaptation. Thus in many passages it is hard - yes, virtually impossible - to discover the original text.

At this point, and relevant to the above thought, it may not be amiss to quote Dr. Oesterley, whose defense of his own translation may likewise be pleaded for that which we have presented:

"When, however, all available help has been received from the Versions, there remain countless passages in which the reader of the Hebrew text feels that it cannot be as the psalmist wrote it. Sometimes there is direct violation of a basic rule of grammar; sometimes the words make no sense whatever (in some of these cases, it may be remarked, the English Versions tacitly alter the text). Here we may admit that if our knowledge of Hebrew were more extensive than it is, it might be possible to discover a meaning for the text as it stands, and a good deal has been done in recent years by the use of comparative philology to elucidate passages hitherto regarded as unintelligible. But this expedient also carries us only a short distance, and in a very large number of places we are forced to guess at what the original text was. A few of these guesses commend themselves at once, and will receive general acceptance, but in the great majority of the passages where the text has been amended . . . it is frankly admitted that we cannot be at all certain that the text translated is what the psalmist wrote. We can only say that, in the judgment of the best Hebrew scholarship available, the words adopted are grammatical and intelligible, and may well have been those which the writer actually used. Conjectural emendation is inevitable; to use a phrase employed by one of our great scholars, it is at least as defensible as "conjectural translation". We can only hope that we have been rightly guided in our choice of the text, and that the readings adopted . . . will at least help to bring home the message of the psalmists."*

Though there has been no deliberate attempt at innovation in translation - that province having been dealt with by vastly abler hands than mine - nevertheless the aim and procedures employed, as set forth above, have resulted in a translation not entirely duplicated in toto by any other now extant.

* Oesterley, W.O.E.: THE PSALMS: Translated with Text-Critical and Exegetical Notes (London: S. P. C. K.; New York: The MacMillan Co., 1939). P. 36.

As an aid to the layman in the better comprehension of the meaning, background, and setting of certain of the psalms I have inserted a goodly number of short introductions and footnotes, which I trust will prove helpful.

In this arrangement the following abbreviations have been used to designate the parts to be read by the minister and the congregation, respectively:

V (Versicle): Minister
R (Response): Congregation
VR: Minister and congregation together

Although the name "Yahweh" abounds in these psalms, I have for the most part avoided its use, inasmuch as it is a term generally unfamiliar to the lay mind. Usually I have substituted for it "Lord" or "O Lord"; occasionally, following Moffatt, "the Eternal." I have, however, used it in a few instances - very few - where the thought of the psalm seemed definitely to demand the naming of Israel's God. On the other hand, in the prefaces and footnotes I have used the name "Yahweh" quite freely.

In referring to the translations used certain abbreviations have been employed, to wit:

JPSA - The Holy Scriptures according to the Masoretic text
A New Translation
with the aid of previous versions and with consultation
of Jewish authorities (The Jewish Publication Society
of America: Philadelphia: 1943)

AV - Authorized or King James Version

Coverdale or PBV - Prayer Book version of the Psalter

Smith, Powis Smith, or AT - The Complete Bible: An American
Translation. Smith and Goodspeed, editors. (Powis Smith
did the translation of the Psalter.)

Moffatt - The Bible: A New Translation by James Moffatt

Oesterley - W. O. E. Oesterley: THE PSALMS: Translated with
Text-Critical and Exegetical Notes.

CHAPTER II

FORMS OF HEBREW POETRY

With few exceptions each line of Hebrew poetry is divided into at least two parts, of which the second part frequently repeats the thought of the first. This is called "parallelism of verse-members." Between the two half-lines usually occurs a caesura, or pause. Instead of proceeding in a continuous line as would a prose-writer, the mind of the poet goes back and moves along a line parallel to its former course. This will be clarified in the examples shortly to be cited.

The chief types of parallelism are as follows:

(a) Synonymous. The same thought is repeated with some exactness.

Examples:

Ps. 83:14 -- As when fire kindleth in a forest,
as a flame blazeth on the hills.

Ps. 8:4 -- What is man that thou shouldst think of him,
and the son of man that thou shouldst care for him?

Ps. 6:1 -- O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger,
and in thine indignation chasten me not.

Ps. 9:15 -- The nations are sunk in the pit thy made,
in the net which they hid is their foot taken.

Ps. 2:4 -- He that abideth in the heavens laugheth,
the Lord doth have them in derision.

Ps. 12:2 -- They speak lies each with his neighbour,
with false lips and double heart do they speak.

Ps. 16:6 -- Fair prospects are allotted me,
a blissful heritage is mine.

Ps. 22:12 -- Mighty bulls surround me,
strong ones of Bashan encompass me.

(b) Antithetic. This involves contrast. Sometimes the same idea is expressed first positively, then negatively.

Examples:

Ps. 90:6 -- At morn it doth blossom and burgeon,
at eve it doth droop and wither.

Ps. 1:6 -- For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked shall perish.

Ps. 28:3b - That speak peace with their neighbours,
but evil is in their heart.

Ps. 30:5b - In the evening weeping,
but joy at morn.

Ps. 132:18 - His enemies will I clothe with shame,
but on him shall his crown glisten.

(c) Synthetic. The sense runs on continuously.

Examples:

Ps. 2:6 -- Yea, I have set up my king
on Zion, my holy hill.

Ps. 22:25 - From him is my praise
in the great congregation.

Ps. 25:1 -- Unto thee, O Lord,
do I lift up my soul.

Ps. 27:6 -- And now is mine head lifted up
over my foes round about me.

Ps. 27:7 -- Hearken, O Lord, to my voice
in the day that I call.

To be sure, it might be objected that this is not true parallelism in thought; however, each member of the line has the same number of significant words in Hebrew. A better name for this type is formal parallelism.

(d) Emblematic. The name suggests the type: characterized by emblems, or symbols, Examples:

Ps. 103:13 - Like as a father pitieth his children,
so Yahweh pitieth them that fear him.

Ps. 68:2 -- As smoke is driven by the wind, as wax melts at the fire,
so let the wicked perish before God.

Ps. 42:1 -- As the heart panteth for waterbrooks,
so panteth my soul for thee, O God.

Ps. 58:4 -- They have poison like a serpent,
as a deaf cobra that stoppeth its ears.

(e) Stairlike. A part of the member is repeated, made a starting point for fresh progress. Examples:

Ps. 29:5 -- The voice of Yahweh breaketh the cedars,
Yahweh breaketh the cedars of Lebanon.

Ps. 59:16 -- But I will sing of thy might,
exult loudly in thy love at morn.

(f) Introverted. Involves a series of lines in which the parallelism is chiastic, the first and last being parallel, and the intervening lines corresponding with one another.

Example:

Ps. 6:9-11 - Depart, ye workers of trouble, from me,
For he hath heard the voice of my weeping,
Yahweh hath heard my supplication,
Yahweh accepteth my prayer,
They will turn back, they will be put to shame in a moment.

Now there are two broad classes of parallelism: (a) Complete, in which every significant word in one member is balanced by a word in the corresponding member; (b) incomplete. This latter again has two forms: (a) an additional word "compensating" for an omission of a word in the first member; (b) the second member left without any such compensation.

The Majority of the examples cited above are cases of complete parallelism; so that need delay us no longer at this point.

Now for a few cases of incomplete parallelism with compensation.

Psalms 75:6 may be represented diagrammatically thus:

a b c
a' b' d

For not from east nor from west,
nor from wilderness cometh uplifting.

A very common type is illustrated in Psalm 59:16:

a b c
 b' c' d

But I will sing of thy might,
exult loudly in thy love at morn.

Psalm 90:8 is according to the same pattern:

Thou hast set our iniquities before thee,
our secret sins in the light of thy face.

Sometimes only one term in the first member is represented in the second,
and two new terms are added, viz, Ps. 81:10:

a b c
 c' d e

I am Yahweh thy God
that brought thee up from the land of Egypt.

In incomplete parallelism without compensation we normally have two verse-
members of unequal length, the second member the shorter of the two and often
a kind of echo of the first. Examples:

Ps. 57:9. a b c
 a' b'

I will praise thee among the peoples, .. Lord,
hymn thee among the nations.

For great unto the heavens is thy love,
and unto the skies thy truth.

Yea, the sparrow hath found a house,
and the swallow her nest.

For example:

The voice of the Lord in strength,
the voice of the Lord in splendour.

Ps. 23:4. a b
 a' c

This will be recognized as incomplete parallelism with compensation.

The first we offer (Ps. 59:1, 2) is a good example of both internal and external parallelism:

Deliver me from my foes, .. my God, from them that exalt themselves against
me protect me;
Deliver me from workers of iniquity, and from men of blood save me.

Ps. 32:1,2. Another case of both internal and external parallelism:

Oh the bliss of him whose guilt is pardoned, whose sin is forgiven!
Oh the bliss of him whom the Lord has absolved, whose spirit has made full
confession!

Ps. 55:21. Internal antithetical parallelism and external parallelism:

His mouth was smother than butter, while war was in his heart;
Softer than oil were his words, yet were they drawn swords.

Ps. 22:30, 31: Internal synthetic parallelism and external parallelism:

It shall be told about the Lord to a generation that cometh;
His saving deeds shall be declared to generations yet unborn.

Sometimes we find parallelism between the second member of the first,
and the first member of the second line; e. g., Ps. 78:8:

And not become as their fathers, a generation perverse and defiant
A generation that set not its heart, whose spirit was not faithful with God.

In shorter lines external parallelism is much more frequent and exact
than in longer lines. Indeed this is usual (though by no means invariable)
with two-term members. Example, Psalm 79:9:

Help us, O God of our salvation, for thy glorious name's sake.
And deliver us and atone for our sins, for thy name's sake.

A good instance of incomplete external parallelism giving a "stairlike"
arrangement is to be found in Psalm 29:1-2:

Give to Yahweh, ye sons of gods,
Give to Yahweh glory and strength,
Give to Yahweh the glory of his name.

This may be represented by the formula:

a	b	c	d			
a	b			e	f	
a	b			e		g

The rhythm of Hebrew poetry is essentially a rhythm of sense rather than of sound. It is the logical terms which balance one another, not necessarily the number, length or stress of the syllables. The phonetic element is always secondary, the logical element primary. The metrical unit and logical unit must always coincide. Yet, paradoxically, the Hebrew poet is much more concerned with giving utterance to his emotions than with logical exactitude. *

The logical unit may be more than one word. For example, such words as, "all", "every", relative pronouns, and prepositions seldom get separate beats but go with other words. Two nouns in a construct relation (e. g., "children of Israel", "sons of men", "horns of the wild-oxen") are usually counted as one. Moreover, we must remember that several words in English are sometimes required to translate a single word in Hebrew.

On the other hand, a single Hebrew word sometimes has the metrical value of two units, especially when in the plural and having a suffix, prefix, or both. Such two-unit words never, however, form whole verse-members by themselves; they are found only as supplying two terms in three-term verse-members. ¹¹₁₁

* Cf. Oesterley, op. cit., pp. 24-25; and James Muilenburg: The Return to Old Testament Theology, an essay in Christianity and the Contemporary Scene, edited by Randolph C. Miller and Henry H. Shires (Morehouse-Gorham, 1943)

Cf. Oesterley, op. cit., pp. 25-26.

Having discussed the various types of parallelism, we turn now to consider briefly the types of metre.

The smallest combination of terms in a verse-member is a pair. Consequently the simplest metre is 2:2. This is frequent. So also is 3:2, with an occasional interposition of 2:3. Seldom, however, do we find a poem in which either 2:2 or 3:2 occurs alone. Usually when these metres prevail in a psalm, the majority of the lines are 3:2, with a small number of 2:2. (Occasionally a 2:3 line crops up.) The change from 3:2 to 2:2 often indicates a heightening of the emotional tension. A perusal of the psalms in this arrangement will reveal how very effective this change often is.

3:3 is the commonest metre in the Psalms.

2:2:2 appears in the Psalms, but is far from common. (It is of much more frequent appearance in the prophets.) It is rarely, if ever, found alone; it is normally an occasional variation in the midst of 3:3 lines.

3:3:3 also occurs not infrequently.

To sum up, then, the two main types of metre are:

- (a) 3:2 varied by 2:3 and 2:2
- (b) 3:3 varied by 2:2:2 and 3:3:3.

Sometimes a word stands by itself at the beginning of a sentence, another case of the Hebrew tendency to pause for emphasis. These anacruses are usually interjections, vocatives, pronouns, and words of saying, as "And I said" (Ps.55:6); sometimes such words as "Wherefore?" "How long!" "Therefore". They serve to bring into bold relief the words that follow.

We must not leave this chapter without a glance at yet another feature of Hebrew poetry. Thus far we have considered the smallest unit, the significant term; the combination of terms to form verse-members; the combination of verse-members to form single lines; and the parallelism that often obtains between two or more lines. We must now refer to a still larger unit that often occurs, the strophe, corresponding to a "stanza", or to a "verse" in a modern hymn. Textual corruption prevents our knowing just how often these occur. Let me, however, suggest certain criteria for use in discerning a strophic arrangement:

(a) a refrain, which may occur at the beginning, end, or middle of a strophe. Sometimes, as in Pss. 59 and 107, a double refrain occurs.

(b) a break in the sense.

(c) the word "Selah" at the end of a strophe.

It might be added that strophes within psalms are often of varying lengths, as witness Psalms 59 and 107.

CHAPTER III

DEVELOPMENT OF PSALTER

Israel's religious outlook was progressive. The final compilation of the Psalter undoubtedly comes from a time when the religion of Israel was fundamentally, and even aggressively, monotheistic; but there survive passages which clearly indicate an earlier polytheism: Yahweh was supreme, but other gods were regarded as valid deities. Other outmoded views also find expression in the Psalter. Indeed, frequently do we come across phrases and metaphors which carry us back to a much older stage in the religious thought of Israel than that to which the Psalter has been adapted. In a word, the Psalms have had an extremely long history in the course of which they have been modified to meet the changing needs of the cultus and the national outlook on religion.

There can be little doubt that prior to the formation of the present book several collections of psalms existed independently, and that these were laid under contribution by the final compilers.

The present Psalter is divided into five "books", probably in imitation of the "five-fifths" of the Law:

I,	1-41
II,	42-72
III,	73-89
IV,	90-106
V,	107-150

But this division is obviously late and is very artificial; for the most part there is little reason for the demarcations. However, it is to be observed that in Books II and III (except for the last six psalms) there is a definite attempt to avoid the name "Yahweh", "Elohim" being substituted

even where "Yahweh" would seem to be more suitable. This strongly suggests the probability that Pss. 42-83 once formed an independent collection which has been transferred bodily to our present Psalter. *

Further, we note the grouping together of certain psalms by subject-matter. Among these may be mentioned:

"Enthronement" Psalms (Psalms beginning "Yahweh is King" or "Yahweh is become King".)

"Hallelujah" Psalms (111-114, 116-118, 135, 136, 146-150)

"Songs of Ascents" (120-134)

Probably these originally formed small collections, from which they have been transferred to the larger book; it is to be noted that even in the present compilation each type tends to stand together.

We find, moreover, that psalms whose titles include certain personal names tend to come together, and these may well have been taken from earlier collections. Thus nearly all the psalms in Book I (exceptions: 1, 2, 33) include the term "David's" in the heading. These probably once formed a separate collection. #

At the close of Ps. 72 we have the remark: "The prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are ended," and Pss. 51-63, 68-70 bear the name of David at the head. This suggests a second Davidic collection, which included the word "prayer" in its general title.

Then there are the psalms bearing the inscription "Of the sons of Qorah". Under this head are Pss. 42-49, 84, 85, 87, 88. The title may refer to the guild of temple singers mentioned in . Chron. 9:19, 31, and 12:6.

* Oesterley, op. cit., p. 3.

Ibid.

The same observation may be made with reference to "Asaph", which appears at the head of Pss. 73-83 and Ps. 50. (A later redactor probably transposed this last from its original position.) "Asaph" may refer to the one who "played loudly on cymbals" (I Chron. 16:5 and elsewhere) or to the "sons of Asaph", a guild of singers alluded to in II Chron. 29:13 and elsewhere. At any rate, these twelve psalms may well have come from a separate collection.

Let us summarize in the words of Dr. Oesterley:

"While, then, the evidence is somewhat scanty, it is sufficient to justify us in the belief that our present Psalter was compiled from earlier collections. The earliest may well have been the first Davidic group, now practically forming Book I. The second large collection, which we may call "Elohistic," had as its main sources three such collections, one bearing the name of the "Sons of Qorah," one that of "Asaph", and one the title "The Prayers of David". The third main group was brought together after the completion of the second . . . and included the "Songs of Ascents", the "Hallelujah" psalms, and, possibly, a section from a third Davidic collection." *

* Op. cit., p. 4

CHAPTER IV

CLASSIFICATION OF THE PSALMS

The psalms may be classified according to their function; that is, according to the part they were designed to play in the life of Israel. Thus we find in the Psalter the following major "types" or "classes":

1. Hymns or songs of praise; e. g., Pss. 113, 117, 135, 103.
A special class is formed by the "Enthronement" psalms, dealt with more fully below.
2. Laments of the community; e. g., Pss. 44, 74, 80.
3. Royal psalms - having to do with the reign of an earthly monarch.
E. g., Pss. 18, 45, 72, 110.
4. Laments of the individual. This forms a very large class. Psalms of this class not infrequently include a small liturgy, in the course of which a divine oracle is given, promising to the worshipper the satisfaction of his need, and enabling him to close with thanksgiving for the coming benefit. Psalms 7 and 56 are excellent examples of this.
5. Thanksgiving of the individual; e.g., Pss. 30, 32, 41, 138.

To these larger groups several smaller classes may be added, such as:

6. Blessings and curses
7. Pilgrim psalms (Sung during ascent of pilgrims up hill of Zion.)
8. Thanksgiving of the Israelite nation
9. Legends
10. Psalms dealing with the Law
11. Prophetic psalms
12. Wisdom psalms

A number of the psalms are "mixed"; that is, several classes alternate with one another in a single psalm, forming a veritable ritual.

The expression "Yahweh is become King" occurs in Psalms 47, 93, 96, 97 and 99; and there are references to Yahweh as "King" and to the "throne of Yahweh" in several other psalms. How many of these may properly be regarded as "Enthronement" psalms is conjectural, but certainly those in which "Yahweh is become King" occur. These psalms were used ritualistically.

The "Enthronement" ceremony was an opening ceremony at some great festival, probably the New Year Festival, celebrated concurrently with the Feast of Tabernacles. Yahweh was proclaimed King, the earthly king representing him. This proclamation was dramatized by the rite of his ascent upon the throne, accompanied by the recitation of the Creation drama, lauding Yahweh as Creator and as God of Nature. * Another important feature of the ceremony was the formal procession, which receives frequent mention in the psalms.

In the "Enthronement" psalms eschatological elements are of frequent appearance. The present tense is often used in reference to the "Day of Yahweh", but it is the "prophetical present" - the future is envisaged as already present and spoken of accordingly.

The prominence of a universal outlook in this class of psalms is also to be noted.

* Oesterley, op. cit., pp. 44 ff.

CHAPTER V

OPPOSING PARTIES

The terms Hasid, plural Hasidim (godly one, godly ones, saints) and Rasa, plural Resa'im (wicked man, wicked ones, sinners) are of frequent occurrence in the Psalter; so frequent in fact is the mention of the antagonism between the righteous and their enemies that one gains the impression that the strife between the two was of a permanent, or at least recurrent, character and reflected a rift within the community that was fundamental and deep-seated in nature.

While there can be little question that these terms are often used in a general sense, on the other hand, in many instances the context argues a more restricted usage; that is, a reference to two opposing politico-religious parties.

The Hasidim are commonly referred to as great lovers of Yahweh and faithful to his commands, but as "poor", "downtrodden", and "humble". By contrast, the Resa'im are as frequently mentioned not only as irreligious, worldly, scornful of the righteous and abounding in vituperation, but as wealthy, proud, and haughty. That the latter belonged to the prosperous, well-fed, upper social strata is only too evident.

To what party groups do these characteristics more fitly apply (at least from the point of view of an orthodox Jew) than, on the one hand, to the Athamar priesthood and its adherents; on the other, to the Zadokites? The former was the orthodox party, the party that later became the Pharisees; the latter, the "free-thinkers", those who

adopted foreign customs and ideas, who cast their lot with the powers-that-be, and who belonged to the wealthy circles; in short, to the party later to be known as the Sadducees.

We are not here concerned with marshaling all the evidence (which is manifold and cumulative) in support of this view, but merely with setting it forth as an aid to the laymen in the better comprehension of some of the allusions in the Psalms.

CHAPTER VI

THEOLOGY AND RELIGIOUS TEACHING OF THE PSALMS

In this chapter we shall refer briefly to some of the salient teachings and ideas contained in the Psalter. From the earliest to the latest psalms covers a period of several centuries; consequently we find a wide variety of viewpoints. To treat of all these would involve writing a book; we must therefore content ourselves with alluding to a few of the major emphases.

In very few of the psalms is a pure monotheism expressed. A few of them do express such a view but for the most part monolatry rather than monotheism is the prevailing conception. This is not to impugn the uniqueness of Yahweh: while other deities were recognized as valid, Yahweh was far and away above them all. "For Yahweh is a great God; and a great King above all gods" (95:3). Taking the Psalter as a whole we can see the change that was taking place in the way the other gods were regarded: sometimes as inferior deities, sometimes apparently as evil spirits, elsewhere as abominations, and, finally, as nonentities, mere figments of the imagination. In a word, we find mirrored in the Psalms the successive stages of belief through which Israel passed in the course of the centuries.

Undeveloped conceptions of Yahweh are of frequent occurrence. Human emotions and foibles are attributed to him. He is represented as a vengeful, wrathful, jealous, bloodthirsty God - a God who is "mighty in battle." Crude anthropomorphisms abound.

Running as a golden strand throughout the Psalter is an emphasis upon trust in God, the rewards that result therefrom, and the duty and joy of worship.

For the most part sacrificial worship is accepted as a matter of course. The offering of goats, rams, bullocks, doves, flour, grain, and the like is looked upon as a normal and desirable thing. A few psalms repudiate the idea of offering such sacrifices, but they are very few. Psalms 40, 50, and 51 are excellent examples of such a repudiation.

Very beautifully do the Psalmists depict the Almighty as the God of love. They use a word that is incapable of translation into English: hesed. English translators render it variously as "love", "lovingkindness", "kindness", "mercy". None of these is adequate. It has a variety of meanings according to the context in which it is used. No one English word will bear its full meaning. It is not merely a mode of action or an emotion. It is an essential spiritual endowment rooted in the inmost being. It connote respect for, and appreciation of, human personality and consecration of one to another. It was a word very dear to the Hebrew heart. The qualities expressed by it were to be found in their completeness only in Yahweh.

Yahweh is proclaimed in the Psalms as the God of law, righteousness, and justice; the God of Nature; and the God of History.

The note of universalism is sounded in some of the psalms. This is particularly true in some of the "Enthronement" psalms, where we find Yahweh set forth as the God of all men and nations. We see here an influence of the prophetic teaching.

The Psalms reveal that the Jew of old had quite a galaxy of supernatural beings: angels, cherubim, and demons. Apparently the cherubim were a sort of personalized chariot on which Yahweh rode through the heavens.

Sin is recognized as that which separates the person from God, not merely ceremonial violations, as earlier. Here the indebtedness of the psalmists to the prophets is evident.

To the psalmists the matter of retribution was quite a problem. They wrestled with it and sought to resolve it in various ways. One method involved an ignoring of the facts of life. They proclaimed the ancient view that material blessings are the lot of the righteous; disaster, the lot of the wicked. A variant of this view was that disaster visited upon the righteous and good fortune upon the wicked was purely transitory. Just wait! a New Deal is coming up! Some of the psalmists give substantially the same answer as Job: "We simply do not know, but let us not impugn the justice of Yahweh". Yet another view was that scores would be settled in the after-life. While the psalmists do not give us a clear-cut idea of their belief in the Hereafter, there are some evidences of their belief in the continuance of the soul.

With regard to eschatological belief, the psalmists looked forward to a "restoration", a "bringing back" of the primeval time of bliss, a return of the "Golden Age". Yahweh was to accomplish this with great might and splendour. At the "Day of Yahweh" all sorts of convulsions of Nature were to take place: a fire was to go before Him, the mountains were to melt, the earth quake, the seas roar and rage. The Psalms do not contain any reference to a Messiah, though, later, Christian scholars tried to read a Messianic interpretation into some of the passages.

CHAPTER VII

THE PSALMS IN THE SYNAGOGUE

The synagogue became established in Palestine as an institution with an official liturgy soon after the end of the Maccabaeen Wars, toward the close of the second century B.C. * Straightway the synagogue took over from the temple, along with other features of worship, the use of the Psalms.

It was the custom in the temple, after the daily morning sacrifice, to sing Ps. 105:1-15, and after the daily evening sacrifice, Ps. 96. This custom was adopted by the synagogue.

In the temple special psalms for each day of the week were sung by the Levites. This custom was likewise taken over by the synagogue. The psalms were, in order: Pss. 24, 48, 83, 94, 81, 93, 92.

In the temple and synagogue alike Psalms 145-150 were used as an integral part of the daily service.

The Hallel psalms (113-118, the word means "Praise") were taken over from the temple liturgy and sung in the synagogues after morning prayer on eighteen days of the year, including those of the New Moon.

We turn now to the use of the Psalms in the synagogue after the destruction of the temple. In addition to the Hallel, which, along with certain other psalms, was known by heart by the congregation, we find the following uses:

* Though in the lands of the Dispersion synagogues undoubtedly existed long before this date.

For the Passover the special psalm appointed was Ps. 135.

For the Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkoth) the special psalm was Ps. 76.

On the eighth day of the feast Ps. 12 was used, with Ps. 111 as an alternative.

For the New Moon the special psalms were Pss. 98 and 104.

For the Feast of Dedication and for Purim the special psalms were Ps. 30 and Ps. 7, respectively.

We may note here that the special psalms for these various festivals were so chosen because in each case they contained something that made them peculiarly appropriate for the occasion - some significant word or allusion.

Psalms occupied an important part in the Sabbath services. These services were especially connected with the work of creation and with Israel's deliverance from Egypt, when it became a nation. Accordingly the special psalms used bore especially on these things. The special psalms for the Morning Service were: Pss. 19, 92, 93, 100, 135, 136; for the Evening Service: Pss. 67 and 144. In addition there was, and is, for the service of the Sanctification of the Sabbath, Pss. 29, 92, 95-99; and for the Conclusion of the Sabbath, the repeated use of Pss. 67 and 144.

We come now to the Fast Days. We mention a few of them, together with the psalms regarded as appropriate to these occasions:

Yom Kippur - Pss. 130, 103

Fast of Gedaliah - Morning Service: Pss. 20, 25, 83
Evening Service: Pss. 20, 25, 102

Fast of Tebeth - Ps. 74

Fast of Tammuz - Ps. 79

Fast of Ab - Ps. 137

In addition to the uses indicated above, it has always been the custom for verses from different psalms to be used in various parts of the services as versicles.

It will thus be seen that the liturgical use of the Psalms in the Jewish synagogue was of outstanding importance. However, it has always been recognized that many of them were never intended for public worship. In the modern synagogue only about half of the Psalms are used; such psalms as 35, 37, 45, 58, 78, and 109, for example, not being regarded as suitable for public worship. There is every reason to believe that the early Jewish communities exercised a similar discrimination.

CHAPTER VIII

THE PSALMS IN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

The early Christians took over from the temple and synagogue the use of psalms in their worship. A very ancient element in the synagogue worship, which, in turn, was almost certainly adapted from the temple worship, was the use of verses from the psalms as versicles. This was early taken over by the Christian Church and is still used. This use of versicles early found its way into the different parts of the early Church Liturgies. Some scholars hold that the Anaphora was originally modelled on the Hallel.

How abundant was the use of the psalms in the early Church may be gathered from the words of Chrysostom (circa 345-407):

"If we keep vigil in the Church, David comes first, last, and midst. If, early in the morning, we seek for the melody of hymns, first, last, and midst is David again. If we are occupied with the funeral solemnities of the departed, if virgins sit at home and spin, David is first, last, and midst . . . In the monasteries, amongst those holy choirs of angelic armies, David is first, last, and midst. In the convents of virgins, where are bands of them that imitate Mary; in the deserts, where are men crucified to this world and having their conversations with God, first, midst, and last is he."

Among the mediaeval Service Books was the Psalterium containing the whole of the Psalter and divided for daily reading so as to read through in the course of the week.

Candidates for ordination were required to know the whole of the Psalter by heart. Gennadius, Patriarch of Constantinople (494) refused to ordain anyone who could not do so; and canons to the same effect were passed at the Eighth Council of Toledo (653) and at the Council of Orviedo (1050).*

* Oosterley, op. cit., p. 108

When the "Canonical Hours" of prayer were introduced several psalms were read at each of the eight offices. These were for the monasteries and the clergy, but in the devotional manuals circulated for the laity psalms likewise occupied a prominent part. The Prymer, authorized by the English Church for the private devotion of the people for at least 150 years preceding the Reformation, contained the seven penitential psalms (Pss. 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, and 143), Psalms 120-134, and the whole of the long 119th Psalm.

These few details will give some idea of the abundant use of the Psalms in the Christian Church.

A word remains to be added regarding the rendition of the Psalter in the Book of Common Prayer. When Jerome made his translation of the Scriptures in the latter part of the fourth century, he made of the Psalms three different translations: the Roman, the Gallican, and the Hebrew. This second was brought to England and came ultimately to be used throughout the Church of England. With slight revisions the psalms in the Prayer Book Psalter are from the Gallican Psalter. This explains why in many passages this translation differs from that of the Authorized Version and later English versions, the latter having been made direct from Hebrew manuscripts.

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PSALM 1

1. VR: O the blessedness of the man
that doth not walk
in the counsel of the wicked,

V: And in the way of sinners doth stand,
R: And in the seat of scorers doth not sit.
2. V: But in the Law of the Lord is his delight,
R: And in His Law doth he meditate day and night.
3. V: He is like a tree
planted by the water,
R: The fruit of which
it bringeth forth in its season,
V: And its leaf fadeth not.
R: And whatsoever he doeth it prospereth.
4. V: Not so are the wicked, not so,
R: But like the chaff which the wind driveth away are they.
5. V: Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment,
R: Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.
6. V: For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous,
R: But the way of the wicked shall perish.

PSALM 2

1. V: Why do the heathen so furiously rage together?
R: And why do the people imagine a vain thing?
2. V: The kings of the earth conspire together
R: And the rulers take joint counsel
V: Against the Lord
R: And against his anointed;
3. V: "Let us break their bonds asunder,
R: And let us cast away from us their cords."
4. V: He that abideth in the heavens laugheth;
R: The Lord doth have them in derision.
5. V: Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath,
R: And in his fierce anger terrify them.
6. V: "Yea, I have set up my king
R: On Zion my holy hill!"
7. V: I will speak concerning the Lord's decree:
R: He said unto me:
V: "My son art thou;
R: This day have I begotten thee.
8. V: Ask, and I will give
nations for thine inheritance,
R: And for thy possession the ends of the earth;
9. V: Thou shalt break them with an iron rod;
R: And dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."
10. V: And now, O ye kings, be wise;
R: Be instructed, O ye judges of the earth.
11. V: Serve the Lord with fear,
R: And with trembling kiss his feet,
12. V: Lest he be angry, and ye perish in the way,
R: For his wrath may soon be kindled.
VR: O the blessedness of all that seek refuge in Him!

PSALM 3

1. V: Lord, how many are mine adversaries!
R: Many are they that rise up against me.
2. V: Many are they which say to my soul,
R: "No help for thee in thy God!" Selah.
3. V: But thou, O Lord,
art a shield about me;
R: My glory, and lifter up of mine head.
4. V: I cried unto the Lord with my voice,
R: And he answered me from his holy hill. Selah.
5. V: I laid me down and slept;
R: I awoke, for the Lord sustained me.
6. V: I have no fear of ten thousands of people,
R: That set themselves against me round about.
7. V: Arise, O Lord;
R: Save me, my God:
V: For thou dost smite all mine enemies on the cheek-bone;
R: Thou dost break the teeth of the wicked.
8. V: To the Lord belongeth help:
R: Upon thy people be thy blessing. Selah.

PSALM 4

(Metre: generally 2:2 or 4:4)

1. V: When I cry, answer me,
R: O God of my righteousness:
V: When I was in trouble thou didst set me at large;
R: Be gracious unto me, and hear my prayer.
2. V: O ye sons of men, how long
R: Shall my glory be for dishonour?
V: Ye love vanity,
R: Ye seek falsehood. Selah.
3. V: But know that the Lord
did wondrously show his mercy to me;
R: The Lord doth hear me
when I call unto him.
4. V: Be perturbed, but sin not;
R: Commune with your heart
on your couch, and be silent. Selah.
5. V: Bring righteous offerings,
R: And trust in the Lord.
6. V: Many say:
"Who showeth us good?
R: Departed from us
is the light of his countenance!"
7. V: The Lord hath given
joy in my heart,
R: Greater than when their corn
and their wine were abundant.
8. V: Altogether in peace
will I lie down and sleep:
R: For thou, Lord, only,
makest me to dwell in safety.

PSALM 5

(The metre is 3:2 throughout)

1. V: Give ear to my words, O Lord:
R: Attend to my sighing.
2. V: Give heed to the sound of my cry,
R: My king and my God:
V: For to thee do I pray at morn,
3. R: Mayest thou hear my voice;
V: At morn I make ready for thee,
R: And watch for thee.
4. V: For thou delightest not in wickedness,
R: An evil man sojourneth not with thee;
5. V: The arrogant stand not up
R: Before thine eyes;
V: Thou hatest all workers of iniquity,
6. R: All them that speak lies;
V: The man of blood and deceit
R: Thou dost abhor, O Lord.
7. V: As for me, because of the greatness of thy love,
R: I enter thy house;
V: I worship in thy holy temple
R: In the fear of thee.
8. V: Lead me, O Lord, in thy righteousness
Because of mine adversaries,
R: Make straight before me thy way.
9. V: For there is no understanding in their mouth,
R: Their inward part is destruction,
V: An open sepulchre is their throat,
R: They make smooth their tongue.
10. V: Hold thou them guilty, O God,
R: May they fall through their own plannings,
V: Because of the multitude of their transgressions repel them,
R: For they have rebelled against thee.
11. V: But let them that trust in thee rejoice,
R: Let them ever shout for joy,
V: And let them continually exult in thee,
R: All that love thy name.
12. V: For thou dost bless the righteous man,
R: O Lord, with peace,
V: And dost cover him as with a shield,
R: Dost crown him with favour.

PSALM 6

(The first of the penitential psalms. Metre: generally 3:3)

1. V: O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger,
R: And in thine indignation chasten me not.
2. V: Have mercy on me, O Lord,
for I am withered away,
R: Heal me, for my bones are dried up.
3. V: My soul is greatly terrified,
R: But thou, O Lord, how long?
4. V: Turn thee, O Lord,
deliver my soul,
R: Save me for thy lovingkindness' sake.
5. V: For in death there is no remembrance of thee,
R: In Sheol who will give thanks unto thee?
6. V: I am weary with my sighing . . .
I flood my couch every night,
R: With my tears I deluge my resting-place.
7. V: Mine eye wasteth away for grief,
R: Groweth weak because of all my distress.
8. V: Depart from me,
all ye workers of iniquity,
R: For the Lord hath heard the sound of my weeping;
9. V: The Lord hath heard my supplication,
R: The Lord hath accepted my prayer.
10. V: Let all mine enemies be greatly terrified,
R: Let them turn away and be put to shame suddenly.

Notes: Latter part of psalm seems to have been added a little later by the same writer. Note change from plaintive grief to triumphant denunciation of enemies, together with declaration that God has heard his prayer.

In what follows: "I am weary with my sighing," something seems to have fallen out of the text. *

* Oesterley: The Psalms, p. 1166

PSALM 7

1. V: O Lord, my God,
in thee do I trust;
R: Save me from my persecutor, and deliver me,
2. V: Lest he tear my soul like a lion,
R: Rending, and none delivereth.
3. V: O Lord, my God, if I have done this, if there be guile on my hands,
4. if I have requited evil to my friend, or plundered him that
was without cause my enemy,
5. R: Then let the enemy pursue me, and overtake me, and trample my
life to the earth, and lay my glory in the dust. Selah.
6. V: Arise up, Lord, in thy wrath, and lift up thyself against the
rage of mine enemies;
7. R: Arise up for me at the judgment thou has commanded, and
surround thyself with the assembly of the peoples, and lift up
thyself again.
8. V: The Lord judgeth the peoples;
R: Judge me, O Lord,
V: According to my righteousness,
R: And according to my integrity.
9. V: O let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end;
R: But establish thou the righteous.
V: For he that trieth the hearts and reins
R: Is a righteous God.
10. V: My shield is with God,
R: Who saveth the upright of heart.
11. V: God is a righteous judge,
R: And God is provoked every day.
12. V: If a man turn not, he will whet his sword,
R: He hath bent his bow, and made it ready.
13. V: For him hath he prepared the instruments of death,
R: He maketh his arrows fiery shafts.
14. V: Behold!
He travaileth with iniquity,
he conceiveth mischief,
he bringeth forth falsehood.
15. R: He dug a pit, and burrowed it out,
and is fallen into the hole he made.
16. V: His mischief shall return upon his own head,
R: And upon his crown shall his violence descend.
17. V: I will praise the Lord for his righteousness,
R: I will praise the Name of the Lord Most High.

PSALM 8

1. VR: O Lord, our Lord, how glorious is thy name in all the earth:
V: Thou whose praise is sung to the heavens,
2. R: From the mouths of babes and infants.
V: Thou has established strength because of thine enemies,
R: To still the enemy and the revengeful.
3. V: When I behold thy heavens,
the work of thy fingers,
R: The moon and the stars which thou hast prepared,
4. V: What is man that thou shouldst think of him,
R: And the son of man that thou shouldst care for him.
5. V: Yet thou hast made him but little lower than God,
R: And dost crown him with glory and honour!
6. V: Thou makest him to have dominion over the works of thine hands,
R: Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet:
7. V: Sheep and oxen, all of them,
R: And also the beasts of the field;
8. V: Birds of the air,
fishes of the sea,
R: All that traverse the paths of the sea.
9. VR: O Lord, our Lord, how glorious is thy name in all the earth!

PSALMS 9 and 10

(Appear as one psalm in certain MSS and versions. Internal and external evidence that the two psalms originally constituted a unity. See Oesterly, op. cit., p. 141)

1. V: I will praise thee, O Lord, with all my heart;
R: I will speak of all thy marvellous works.
2. V: I will rejoice and exult in thee,
R: I will sing praises to thy name, O thou most High;
3. V: Because my enemies turn backward,
R: They stumble and perish before thee;
4. V: For thou hast maintained my right and my cause,
R: Thou satest on the throne judging righteously.
5. V: Thou hast rebuked the nations,
Thou has destroyed the wicked,
Thou has blotted out their name,
for ever and ever.
6. R: The foe is at an end,
no more to be remembered,
the towns thou has torn up
lie in lasting ruin
7. V: But the Lord sitteth for ever,
R: Establishing his throne for judgment
8. V: And he judgeth the world in righteousness,
R: He passeth sentence on the peoples with equity.
9. V: The Lord is a refuge for the oppressed,
R: A refuge in times of trouble.
10. V: And they trust in thee,
they that know thy name,
R: For thou dost not forsake
them that seek thee, Lord.
11. V: Sing praises to the Lord who dwelleth in Zion;
R: Make known among the peoples his deeds!
12. V: For he avengeth blood,
He remembereth them,
R: He doth not forget the cry of the afflicted.
13. V: The Lord has seen my affliction, and pitied me,
lifting me above the gates of death,
14. R: That in the gates of Zion I may chant his praise,
exulting in his aid.
15. V: The nations are sunk
in the pit they made;
R: In the net which they hid
is their foot taken.
16. V: The Lord hath made known
that he executeth judgment;
R: In the work of his hands
is the wicked ensnared. Higgaion. Selah.
17. V: The wicked will return to Sheol,
R: All the nations that forget God.
18. V: For the needy shall not be always forgotten,
R: Nor the hope of the afflicted perish for ever.

PSALMS 9 and 10 (Cont.)

19. V: Arise, O Lord,
Let not man prevail,
R: Let the nations be judged before thee.
20. V: Put them in terror, O Lord,
R: Let the nations know they are only men. Selah.
-

- Ps.10: 1. V: Why standest thou afar off, O Lord?
R: Why hidest thou thyself in the times of trouble?
2. V: Through the pride of the wicked the poor is hotly pursued,
R: They are taken in the devices that they have imagined.
3. V: For the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire,
R: And the covetous disowns, despises the Lord;
4. V: He thinks, in his insolence, "God will not punish";
R: All his thoughts are, "There is no God."
5. V: Thine ordinances are far from his sight;
R: Life for him is always stable;
V: He laughs at any who oppose him,
6. R: Thinking he can never fail, never come to grief.
7. V: His mouth is full
of deceits and oppression,
R: Under his tongue
mischief and iniquity;
8. V: He sitteth in ambush in villages,
R: In hiding-places, to slay the innocent,
V: His eyes lie in wait for the helpless.
9. He lurketh in a hiding-place,
like a lion in a thicket,
To catch the afflicted,
To draw him into his net.
10. R: He croucheth, he boweth down,
And the helpless fall into his mighty claws.
11. V: He saith in his heart;
"God hath forgotten.
R: He hath hidden his face,
He will never see it."
12. V: Arise, O Lord,
lift up thine hand,
R: Forget not the afflicted;
13. V: Why has the wicked despised God,
R: And said to himself, "Thou wilt not search out?"

PSALMS 9 and 10 (Cont.)

14. V: But thou has seen this misery and mischief;
R: Thou markest it, to punish it thyself!
V: The hapless may leave their plight to thee,
R: Thou Helper of the forlorn.
15. V: Break thou the arm of the wicked,
R: Punish his wickedness till it be no more.
16. V: The Lord is King
for ever and ever,
R: The nations are perished from his land.
17. V: Thou has heard the desire of the meek, O Lord,
R: Thou dost set thy mind, thou dost pay close heed,
18. V: To vindicate the orphan and the oppressed;
R: That man of the earth
should terrify no more.

PSALM 11

1. V: In the Lord do I trust;
How say ye to my soul:
"Flee to the mountain!"
2. R: For, behold, the wicked
do bend their bow,
V: They make ready their arrow upon the string
R: To shoot at the upright of heart."
3. V: If the foundations be destroyed,
R: What shall the righteous do?
4. V: The Lord is in his holy temple,
R: The Lord, his throne is in the heavens;
V: His eyes behold,
his eyelids scrutinize,
R: The children of men.
5. V: The Lord trieth
both righteous and wicked,
R: He who loveth violence
doth his soul abhor;
6. V: He raineth upon the wicked
coals of fire,
R: A burning wind
is the portion of their cup.
7. V: For the Lord is righteous,
He loveth righteous acts,
R: The upright shall behold his face.

PSALM 12

1. V: Help, Lord, for love hath ceased,
R: For faithfulness is no more among the sons of men.
2. V: They speak lies each with his neighbor;
R: With false lip and double heart do they speak.
3. V: May the Lord cut off all false lips,
R: And the tongue that maketh great boasts,
4. V: Those who say, "We will make ourselves mighty by our tongue;
R: Our lips are with us, who is our master?"
5. V: "Because of the oppression of the afflicted,
R: Because of the sighing of the poor,
V: Now will I arise," saith the Lord,
R: "I will give him the help he longeth for."
6. V: The words of the Lord are pure words,
R: Tried silver, purified seven times.
7. V: Do thou protect us, O Lord,
R: From this generation for ever.
8. V: The wicked parade to and fro,
R: When vileness is exalted among men.

PSALM 13

1. V: How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord,? for ever?
R: How long wilt thou hide thy face from me?
2. V: How long shall I harbour sorrows in my soul,
R: Grief in my heart, day and night?
V: How long shall mine enemy be exalted over me?
3. V: Consider and hear me, O Lord, my God;
R: Lighten mine eyes lest I sleep in death;
4. V: Lest mine enemy say: "I have prevailed against him";
R: Lest mine adversaries rejoice because I am moved.
5. V: As for me, in thy love do I trust,
R: My heart shall rejoice in thy succour;
V: I will sing unto the Lord,
R: For he treateth me kindly.

PSALM 14

(Note that this psalm is practically identical with Psalm 53.)

1. V: The fool saith in his heart:
R: "There is no God!"
V: They act basely and abominably,
R: There is none that doeth good.
2. V: God looketh down from heaven
R: Upon the children of men
V: To see if there are any that act wisely,
R: That seek after God.
3. V: Every one of them is gone back,
R: They are altogether become corrupt,
V: None doeth good,
R: No, not even one.
4. V: Have the workers of iniquity no knowledge?
R: They devour my people;
V: They eat the bread of God,
R: But call not upon his name.
5. V: Then are they in great terror;
R: For God is with the righteous generation.
6. V: Ye would put to shame the plans of the poor,
R: But the Lord is his refuge.
7. V: O for the salvation of Israel from Zion,
R: When God bringeth back the restoration of his people;
V: Jacob shall rejoice,
R: Israel shall be glad.

PSALM 15

Explanation: This psalm presents the scene of a worshipper coming up to the temple to worship. At the entrance the priest, appealing to Yahweh, asks who is worthy to enter the place of worship. The worshipper gives the reply, implying that he fulfills the conditions; Whereupon the priest assures him that "he that doeth these things shall never be moved." --Oesterley, op. cit., pp. 152-153.

1. V: "Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill?"
 2. R: "He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart.
 3. He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbor, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor.
 4. In whose eyes a vile person is condemned; but he honoureth them that fear the Lord. He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not.
 5. He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent."
- V: "He that doeth these things shall never be moved."

PSALM 16

1. V: Keep me safe, O God,
R: For with thee I take shelter,
2. V: "Thou art my Lord," I say to the Eternal,
my welfare rests on thee alone;
3. in the saints of the land, thy noble followers,
is all my delight."
4. R: Sorrow on sorrow is theirs, who choose some other god;
their bloody libations I will never pour;
their names I will never mention.
5. V: Thou art what I obtain from life, O thou Eternal,
R: Thou thyself art my share;
6. V: Fair prospects are allotted me,
R: A blissful heritage is mine.

7. V: I bless the Eternal for his counsel,
R: For teaching me during the very night;
8. V: I keep the Eternal at all times before me;
R: With him so close, I cannot fail.
9. V: And so my heart and soul rejoice,
R: My body rests secure;
10. V: For never wilt thou let me sink to death,
R: Nor leave thy loyal one to the grave;
11. VR: Thou wilt reveal the path to life,
to the full joy of thy presence,
to the bliss of being close to thee for ever.

Note: Moffatt's translation is used in the above.

PSALM 17

1. V: Hear the right, O Lord, attend unto my cry;
R: Give ear unto my prayer from lips without deceit.
2. V: Let my judgment come forth from thy presence;
R: Let thine eyes behold equity.
3. V: Thou has tried my heart, thou hast visited me by night;
R: Thou has tried me, and findest not wickedness in me.
4. V: My mouth shall not transgress after the deeds of men;
R: The command of thy lips do I observe.
5. V: My steps have held fast to thy tracks;
R: My footsteps have not faltered.
6. V: I call upon thee, for thou wilt hear me, O God;
R: Incline thine ear unto me, and hear my plea.
7. V: Strong saviour, in thy kindness interpose,
R: For those who shelter with thee from their foes.
8. V: Keep me as the apple of thine eye,
R: Hide me in the shadow of thy wings,
9. V: From the ungodly who would harry me,
R: The eager enemies that encircle me.
10. V: Their hearts are closed to pity,
R: Their words are insolent;
11. V: At every step they dog me,
R: Alert to pull me down,
12. V: Like lions hungry to devour,
R: Like lions lurking for their prey.
13. V: Arise, O Lord, come before him, cast him down,
R: Save my soul from the wicked one.
V: With thy sword slay them,
14. R: With thine own hand, Lord;
V: Destroy them from the world,
R: Snatch them from life.
V: With thy treasure fill their belly,
let them be sated therewith,
R: And let them leave their residue to their babes.
15. V: As for me, in righteousness will I behold thy face,
R: I shall be satisfied when I awake with thine appearance.

PSALM 18

(This psalm occurs also in 2 Sam. 22.)

1. VR: I love thee, O Lord, my strength;
2. My rock, my stronghold, and my deliverer,
My God, my refuge, in him do I trust;
My shield, and the horn of my safety.
3. V: Worthy to be praised is he; I called upon the Lord,
R: And from mine enemies I have been delivered.
4. V: The waves of death encompassed me,
R: And the floods of destruction terrified me;
5. V: The cords of Sheol surrounded me,
R: And the snares of death came upon me.
6. V: In my trouble I called on the Lord,
R: And unto my God I cried for help;
V: He heard my voice from his sanctuary,
R: And my cry came into his ears.
7. V: The earth shook and trembled,
R: The foundations of the mountains quaked
V: They reeled to and fro because he was wroth.
8. V: Smoke went up from his nostrils,
R: And fire from his mouth devoured,
V: Coals kindled because of him.
9. V: He bowed the heavens and descended,
R: And darkness was under his feet;
10. V: And he rode upon a cherub, and flew,
R: He swept onwards on the wings of the wind;
11. V: He made darkness his hiding-place,
R: His tabernacle round about him,
V: A gathering of the clouds of the skies.
12. V: Brightness from his presence passed forth,
R: Hailstones and coals of fire;
13. V: The Lord thundered from the heavens,
R: Yea, the Most High uttered his voice;
14. V: He sent forth arrows and scattered them,
R: He shot forth lightning and discomfited them;
15. V: The stream-beds of the sea were disclosed,
R: And the foundations of the earth were revealed,
V: Because of thine anger, O Lord,
R: At the blast of the breath of thy nostrils,
16. V: He sent from on high, and took me,
R: He drew me out of mighty waters,
17. V: He delivered me from my fierce foes,
R: From haters far too strong for me.
18. V: They overcame me in the day of my distress,
R: But the Lord became my support;
19. V: He brought me forth into a wide place,
R: He delivered me, for he delighted in me.

PSALM 18 (Cont.)

20. V: The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness,
R: He recompensed me according to the cleanness of mine hands;
21. V: For I kept the ways of the Lord,
R: And sinned not against my God;
22. V: For all his judgments were before me,
R: And I put not his statutes from me;
23. V: Yea, I was perfect with him,
R: And kept me from mine iniquity;
24. V: And the Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness,
R: According to the cleanness of mine hands before him.
25. V: With the merciful thou art merciful,
R: With the perfect thou art perfect;
26. V: With the pure thou art pure
R: And with the froward thou art froward.
27. V: An afflicted people thou savest,
R: But haughty eyes thou humblest.
28. V: For thou art my lamp, O Lord,
R: My God that lighteneth my darkness.
29. V: For with thee I will shatter a wall,
R: And with my God I will leap o'er a fence.
30. V: O God,- perfect is his way;
R: The word of the Lord is pure,
V: A shield to all that trust in him.
31. V: For who is God save Yahweh,
R: And who is a Rock but our God?
32. V: The God that girdeth me with strength,
R: And maketh my way perfect;
33. V: He maketh my feet like hinds' feet,
R: And setteth me up on the heights;
34. V: He teacheth my hands to war,
R: And placeth a bow in mine arms.
35. V: Thou gavest me the shield of my safety,
R: And thy encouragement strengtheneth me ever.
36. V: Thou enlargest my footsteps under me,
R: So that my ankle-bones do not give way.
37. V: I pursued mine enemies, and overtook them,
R: And turned not till thy were consumed;
38. V: I shattered them so that thy could not rise,
R: They fell underneath my feet.
39. V: Thou didst gird me with strength for the battle,
R: Thou didst bow down beneath me those that rose up against me.
40. V: Yea, mine enemies turned the back to me,
R: And as for them that hated me, thou didst destroy them.
41. V: They cried out, but there was no helper,
R: Unto the Lord, but he answered them not;
42. V: I crushed them like the dust of the earth,
R: Like the mire of the streets did I stamp on them.

PSALM 18 (Cont.)

43. V: Thou didst save me from the strivings of the people,
R: Thou didst set me at the head of the nations,
V: A people that I knew not served me.
44. V: When they heard me they obeyed me,
R: The sons of strangers cringed before me.
45. V: The sons of strangers fainted away,
R: They came trembling out of their strongholds.
46. V: The Lord liveth, and blessed be my Rock,
R: And exalted be the God that helpeth me;
47. V: The God that granteth me vengeance,
R: And subdueth the peoples under me,
48. V: Who delivereth me from mine angry enemies,
R: And lifteth me from them that rise up against me,
V: And saveth me from violent men.

PSALM 19

Oesterley (op.cit., pp. 167 ff.) thinks that originally here were two independent psalms: the first one comprised in vv. 1-6; the other, verse 7 to end. The first psalm he contends, and summons evidence to show, was patterned after certain Babylonian poetry referring to that people's Sun-God. In the single reference to God, the psalmist uses the word "El", which might refer to any God; whereas, as if by way of compensation, the psalmist who appended the second psalm, gives a seven-fold utterance in the name of "Yahweh".

1. V: The heavens declare the glory of God,
R: And the firmament showeth his handiwork.
2. V: Day unto day poureth forth speech,
R: And night unto night showeth forth wisdom;
3. V: There is no speech nor words,
R: Nor is their voice heard
4. V: Yet their voice goeth forth through all the earth,
R: And their words to the ends of the world.
V: In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun,
5. which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber,
and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race.
6. R: His going forth is from the end of the heaven,
and his circuit unto the ends of it,
and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.

7. V: The law of the Lord is perfect,
R: Refreshing the soul;
V: The testimony of the Lord is trustworthy,
R: Making wise the simple;
8. V: The precepts of the Lord are upright,
R: Rejoicing the heart;
V: The commandment of the Lord is pure,
R: Enlightening the eyes;
9. V: The word of the Lord is pure,
R: Standing fast for ever;
V: The judgments of the Lord are Truth,
R: They are altogether righteous,
10. V: They are preferable to gold,
R: Yea, to much fine gold,
V: Yea, sweeter than honey,
R: And the dripping from the honey-comb.
11. V: Thy servant also is instructed by them,
R: In observing them is great reward;
12. V: Errors, -- who discerneth them?
R: From un-intended sins keep me innocent;

PSALM 19 (Cont.)

13. V: Also from purposeful sins keep thy servant,
R: Let them not master me,
V: Then shall I be perfect and innocent
R: Of great transgression.
14. V: Let the words of my mouth be acceptable,
R: And the meditation of my heart, before thee,
V: O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.

Note: The division between the two original psalms is marked by asterisks.

PSALM 20

A prayer for victory on the eve of a battle, after sacrifices have been offered. Scene: the temple. Verses 1-4, the priest prays in the name of the king; verse 5, the congregation bursts forth in joyful strain, expressing confidence in the victory of their king; verses 6-8, the king himself speaks; ceremony closes with final petition uttered by whole body of worshippers. Below, these various parts are spatially separated.

1. V: May the Lord answer thee
in the day of trouble,
may the name of the God
of Jacob defend thee;
2. May he send help from him sanctuary, and from Zion uphold thee.
3. May he remember all thine offerings, and accept thy burnt sacrifices;
Selah.
4. May he grant thee thy heart's desire and fulfil all thy purpose.
5. R: We will shout for joy at thy victory, exulting in our God.
May the Lord fulfil all thy requests.
6. V: Now I know of a certainty that the Lord giveth victory
to his anointed;
He will answer him from his holy heavens, with the mighty acts of
his right-hand will he help
him.
7. These in chariots
and those in horses,
but we in the name of
our God, are strong;
8. They stumble and fall, but we rise up and stand firm.
9. R: O Lord, save the king, and answer us in the day
we call.

PSALM 21

1. V: O Lord, in thy strength
doth the king rejoice,
R: And because of thy help
he is full of joy;
2. V: The desire of his heart
has thou granted him,
R: And the request of his lips
thou has not denied; Selah.
3. V: Yea, thou didst send
goodly blessings to meet him,
R: Thou didst place on his head
a crown of gold!
4. V: Life he asked,
thou gavest it him,
R: Length of days
for ever and ever!
5. V: Great is his glory
because of thy help,
R: Honour and majesty
hast thou laid on him;
6. V: Yea, thou dost grant him
blessings for ever,
R: Thou makest him glad with the joy of thy presence.
7. V: For the king trusteth in the Lord,
R: And, with the love of the Most High, he will not be moved.
8. V: May thine hand light upon all thine enemies,
R: May thy right-hand shatter all them that hate thee;
9. V: Mayest thou make them like a furnace of fire,
R: In the time of thy wrath mayest thou destroy them,
V: And may the fire consume them.
10. V: Mayest thou destroy their offspring from the earth,
R: And their seed from the sons of men.
11. V: For they purposed evil against thee,
R: They imagined a device, - in vain;
12. V: For thou makest them turn the back,
R: Thy bow-strings thou preparest against the face of them.
13. V: Arise, O Lord, in thy might,
R: We will sing, and praise thy power.

PSALM 22

1. V: My God, my God,
why has thou forsaken me?
R: Why art thou far from my cry,
from the words of my clamour?
2. V: I cry in the day-time,
but thou answerest not,
R: And in the night,
and there is no surcease.
3. V: But thou abidest in the sanctuary,
R: The praise of Israel.
4. V: In thee did our fathers trust,
R: They trusted, and thou didst deliver them;
5. V: Unto thee did they cry, and were rescued,
R: In thee did they trust, and were not put to shame.
6. V: But I am a worm, and no man,
the reproach of men,
and despised of the people.
7. R: All that see me laugh me to scorn,
they shoot out the lip,
they shake the head:
8. V: "He cast himself on the Lord, let him deliver him,
R: Let him rescue him, for he delighteth in him!"
9. V: But thou art my strength from the womb,
R: My trust while on my mother's breasts;
10. V: On thee have I been cast from the womb,
R: From my mother's belly thou art my God.
11. V: Be not far from me now, for trouble is nigh,
R: And there is none to help.
12. V: Mighty bulls surround me,
R: Strong ones of Bashan encompass me;
13. V: He openeth upon me his mouth,
R: A lion ravening and roaring.
14. V: Like water am I poured out,
R: My bones are all out of joint;
V: My heart is become like wax,
R: Melting within mine innermost parts;
15. V: Dried up like a potsherd is my throat,
R: And my tongue cleaveth to my palate,
V: And the dust of death is on my lips.
16. V: For many dogs surround me,
R: The assembly of evil men gather round me,
V: They bind my hands and my feet;

PSALM 22 (Cont.)

17. V: I proclaim all my pains,
R: They gaze and look at me;
18. V: They apportion my garments among them,
R: And upon my vesture do they cast lots.
19. V: But thou, O Lord, be not far,
R: My Helper, haste to mine aid;
20. V: Rescue my soul from the sword,
R: My life from the power of the dog;
21. V: Save me from the mouth of the lion,
R: And mine afflicted one from the horns of the wild-oxen.
22. V: I will declare thy name unto my brethren,
R: In the midst of the congregation will I praise thee;
23. V: Ye that fear the Lord, praise him,
R: All ye seed of Jacob, glorify him,
V: And stand in awe of him, all ye seed of Israel;
24. V: For he hath not despised, he hath not spurned,
R: The affliction of the afflicted one;
V: And he hath not hidden his face from him,
R: And when he cried unto him he hearkened.
25. V: From him is my praise
in the great congregation;
R: My vows will I pay
in the presence of them that fear him.
26. V: The meek shall eat and be satisfied,
R: They that seek him shall praise the Lord.
V: May your heart live for ever.
27. V: Let them recall it and turn,
all the ends of the earth,
R: And let them worship before him,
all the kindreds of the nations.
28. V: For the Kingship is the Lord's,
R: And his rule is over the nations.
29. V: Of a truth, him shall thy worship,
R: All that sleep in the earth,
V: Before him shall they bow down,
R: All they that go down to the dust,
V: And the soul that liveth not
30. R: Shall glorify his power.
V: It shall be told about the Lord
31. V: to a generation that cometh;
R: His saving deeds shall be declared
to generations yet unborn.

PSALM 23

Metre: 3:2, with exception of vv. 1,2, which have 3:3.
"Shadow of death" out of harmony with picture presented - a simple pastoral picture; following Moffatt, Goodspeed, Oesterley, "darkness" substituted. Psalmist refers to one of dark ravines such as abound in Palestine. To preserve consistency of pastoral picture "guide" in place of "comfort", following Oesterley, op. cit., P. 184. "For length of days" in place of "for ever" to parallel "all the days of my life."

1. V: The Lord is my Shepherd, I have no lack;
2. R: In green pastures he maketh me to lie down,
V: Beside still waters doth he lead me,
3. R: He refresheth my soul;
V: He guideth me into paths of righteousness
R: For his name's sake.
4. V: Yea, though I go through a valley of darkness,
R: I fear no evil,
V: With me is thy rod and thy staff,
R: They guide me.
5. V: Thou spreadest out a table before me,
R: In the presence of mine enemies;
V: Thou anointest my head with oil,
R: My cup overfloweth;
6. V: Yea, goodness and lovingkindness shall follow me
R: All the days of my life;
V: And I will dwell in the house of the Lord
R: For length of days.

PSALM 24

In arranging this psalm for responsive reading I have proceeded on the assumption (ff. Oesterley, op. cit., pp. 185 ff.) that it was written to be sung at the great feast, the Feast of Tabernacles, as the worshippers ascend Mount Zion to the temple.

After an ascription of praise to Yahweh, the Creator, a halt is called and one of the priests accompanying the pilgrims raises his voice: "Who may ascend on to the mount of the Lord, and who may stand up in his holy place?" i. e, the temple. (The procession is still at the foot of the hill.)

The reply is made by another priest, after which the priest who had first asked the question addresses the assembled worshippers: "Such is the generation of them that inquire after the Lord, that seek the face of the God of Jacob." The ascent of mount Zion then proceeds.

Arrived at the temple gates there is again a halt, a short triumphal hymn is sung, rendered antiphonally by two bodies of singers, a solo voice intervening with the query: "Who is the King of glory?" Twice the soloist asks this question and twice the reply is given by the chorus.

1. V: The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof,
R: The world and the dwellers therein;
2. V: For he founded it upon the seas,
R: And upon the streams did he firmly set it.
3. V: Who may ascend on to the mount and who may stand up in his
 of the Lord, holy place?
4. R: He that hath innocent hands,
 and a pure heart,
 who hath not lifted up
 his soul to wrongdoing,
 nor sworn deceitfully;
5. He shall receive a blessing
 from the Lord
 and prosperity from the God of his help.
6. V: Such is the generation of them that seek the face of the God
 that inquire after the Lord, of Jacob. Selah.
7. R: Lift up your head, O ye gates,
 and be ye lifted up, ye ancient doors,
 that the King of glory may come in!
8. V: Who is the King of glory?

PSALM 24 (cont.)

R: The Lord strong and mighty,
The Lord mighty in battle!
9. Lift up your heads, O ye gates,
and be ye lifted up, ye ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in!

V: Who is the King of glory?

R: The Lord of hosts,
he is the King of glory! Selah.

PSALM 25

This is one of the acrostic psalms. It is evidently an "individual" psalm, one in which the psalmist speaks of himself throughout, rather than on behalf of his people.

The last line does not belong to the psalm; it is outside the alphabetical sequence. It was added by a later copyist, desirous of making the psalm apply to Israel, thus generalizing it.

The metre is generally 3:3.

1. V: Unto thee, O Lord,
do I lift up my soul;
2. V: In thee have I trusted, let me not be shamed,
R: May mine enemies not laugh me to scorn.
3. V: In truth, none that wait for thee shall be shamed,
R: Shamed shall they be that deal faithlessly to no purpose.
4. V: Thy ways, Lord, make me to know,
R: And thy paths teach me.
5. V: Guide me in thy truth, and teach me,
R: For thou art the God of my help,
- 7c. V: And on thee do I wait every day,
R: Because of thy goodness, O Lord.
6. V: Remember thy tender-mercies and loving kindnesses,
R: For they are from of old;
7. V: The sins of my youth remember not,
R: In accordance with thy mercy remember me.
8. V: Good and upright is the Lord,
R: He instructeth sinners in the way;
9. V: He guideth the meek with justice,
R: And teacheth the poor in his way.
10. V: All the ways of the Lord
are mercy and truth
R: For them that keep his covenant and his testimonies.

PSALM 25 (cont.)

11. V: For thy name's sake, O Lord,
R: Forgive me mine iniquity, for it is great.
12. V: Who, then, is the man that feareth the Lord?
R: He will teach him in the way that he chooseth;
13. V: His soul shall abide in prosperity,
R: And his seed shall inherit the land.
14. V: The friendship of the Lord is for them that fear him,
R: And his covenant is for them to whom he maketh it known.
15. V: Mine eyes are continually unto the Lord,
R: For he bringeth my feet out of the net.
16. V: Look unto me, and be gracious unto me,
R: For alone and afflicted am I.
17. V: The troubles of my heart are increased,
R: Bring me out of my distresses;
18. V: Give heed to mine affliction and my trouble,
R: And forgive all my sins.
19. V: Behold mine enemies, for they are many,
R: With bitter hatred do they hate me.
20. V: Preserve my soul, and deliver me,
R: Let me not be put to shame, for I trust in thee.
21. V: Let integrity and uprightness cover me,
R: For I wait for thee, O Lord.
- [22. Redeem Israel, O God, from all his troubles.]

PSALM 26

1. V: Give me justice, O Lord, for I have walked in my integrity,
R: And I have trusted in the Lord without wavering.
2. V: Try me, O Lord, and prove me,
R: Test my reins and my heart.
3. V: For thy loving kindness is before mine eyes,
R: And I have walked in thy truth.
4. V: I do not sit with worthless men,
R: Nor go with dissemblers,
5. V: I hate the assembly of evil-doers,
R: And do not sit with the wicked.
6. V: I wash mine hands in innocency,
R: And encompass thine alter, O Lord,
7. V: That I may cause the sound of thanksgiving to be heard,
R: And may declare all thy wonder-works;
8. V: I love the habitation of thine house,
R: The place of thy glory's abiding.
9. V: Snatch not away my soul with sinners,
R: And my life with bloodthirsty men,
10. V: In whose hands is evil-purpose,
R: And their right hand is full of bribes.
11. V: But I walk in mine integrity,
R: Redeem me, Lord, and be gracious unto me;
12. V: My foot standeth in a level place,
R: And in the assemblies do I bless thee, O Lord.

PSALM 27

Originally two psalms; viz., vv. 1-6, vv. 7-14. Below separation marked by asterisks. Hebrew text in second psalm very corrupt.

1. V: The Lord is my light and my salvation,
R: Of whom should I be afraid?
V: The Lord is the stay of my life,
R: Of whom should I be in terror?
2. V: When evildoers draw nigh against me
R: To devour my flesh,
V: Mine adversaries and they that are mine enemies,
R: They stumble and fall.
3. V: Though an host encamp against me,
R: My heart doth not fear;
V: Though war arise against me,
R: Even so do I trust.
4. V: One thing have I asked of the Lord,
R: That have I sought.
V: To dwell in the house of the Lord
R: All the days of my life.
V: To experience the felicity of the Lord,
R: And to contemplate his sanctuary;
5. V: For he hideth me in his tabernacle,
R: In the day of trouble,
V: He covereth me in the covert of his tent,
R: He setteth me up upon a rock.
6. V: And now is mine head lifted up
R: O'er my foes round about me,
V: And I will offer in his tabernacle
Sacrifices of joy;
R: I will sing and praise the Lord.

7. V: Hearken, O Lord, to my voice
R: In the day that I call;
V: Be gracious unto me and answer me,
8. R: For my heart is bitter;
V: Thy face do I seek, Lord,
9. R: Hide it not from me;
V: Reject not thy servant in wrath,
R: Mine help art thou,
V: Cast me not off, and forsake me not,
R: O God of my salvation,

PSALM 27 (cont.)

10. V: For my father and my mother have forsaken me,
R: But the Lord will receive me.
11. V: Show me, O Lord, thy way,
R: And lead me in a level path;
V: Let not my foes thwart me,
12. R: Leave me not to the fury of my foes,
V: For false witnesses are risen up against me,
R: And they breathe out violence.
13. V: I had utterly despaired*
R: Had I not believed to see
V: The goodness of the Lord
R: In the land of the living.
14. V: Stand fast, and let thine heart take courage,
R: And wait on the Lord.

* In verse 13 some words have fallen out of the Hebrew text. It reads: "Had I not believed to see the goodness of Yahweh in the land of the living ..." Obviously, the sentence is incomplete as it thus stands. I have inserted the words, "I had utterly despaired," in order to complete the thought which I believe is clearly implied, and to preserve the parallelism.

PSALM 28

The last two verses can hardly be part of the original psalm, since they refer to Yahweh's solicitude for the king and his people; whereas in the rest of the psalm it is for the individual psalmist.

Metre: generally 3:2.

1. V: Unto thee do I cry, O my Rock,
R: Be not deaf unto me,
V: Lest, if thou payest no heed to me,
R: I droop like a dying man.
2. V: Hear the voice of my supplication
R: When I cry unto thee,
V: When I lift up my hands, O Lord,
R: To thine innermost sanctuary.
3. V: Drag me not away with the wicked,
R: And with the workers of iniquity,
V: That speak peace with their neighbours,
R: But evil is in their heart.
4. V: Recompense them according to their doing,
R: And according to the wickedness of their acts,
V: According to the work of their hands render to them,
R: Pay back to them what they have done;
5. V: They heed not the work of the Lord,
R: Nor the doing of his hands;
V: May he cast them down,
R: And not build them up.
6. V: Blessed be the Lord, for he hath heard
R: The voice of my supplication;
7. V: The Lord is my strength and my shield,
R: Mine heart trusteth in him.
V: I was helpen, and my flesh revived,
R: And from my heart I gave him thanks.
8. V: The Lord is the strength of his people,
R: The protection and help of his anointed.
9. V: Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance,
R: Nourish them and bear them up for ever.

PSALM 29

1. V: Ascribe unto the Lord, O ye sons of gods,
R: Ascribe unto the Lord glory and might;
2. V: Ascribe unto the Lord the glory of his name;
R: Worship the Lord in holy array!
3. V: The voice of the Lord is upon the waters,
R: Of the Lord upon many waters,
4. V: The voice of the Lord with power,
R: The voice of the Lord with majesty.
5. V: The voice of the Lord shattereth cedars,
R: Yea, the Lord shattereth the cedars of Lebanon.
6. V: He maketh Lebanon to skip like a calf,
R: And Sirion like a young wild-ox.
7. V: The voice of the Lord heweth out flames of fire.
8. R: The voice of the Lord shaketh the wilderness,
V: The Lord shaketh the wilderness of Kadesh.
9. R: The voice of the Lord whirlleth the trees,
V: The voice of the Lord strippeth bare the forests --
R: While in his temple all are chanting: "Glory!"
10. V: The Lord sitteth above the flood,
R: And the Lord abideth King for ever.

11. V: May the Lord grant strength to his people,
R: May the Lord bless his people with peace.

The last two lines may be, as many commentators hold, a later addition. Certainly the reference to the perpetual regnancy of the Lord gives a nobler conclusion to the psalm.

PSALM 30

1. V: I will exalt thee, O Lord, for thou didst draw me up,
R: And didst not suffer my foes to rejoice over me.
2. V: O Lord, my God, I cried unto thee,
R: And thou didst heal me.
3. V: O Lord, thou broughtest up my soul from Sheol,
R: Thou didst keep me alive from them that go down to the Pit.
4. V: Sing praise to the Lord, O ye godly ones,
R: And give thanks to his holy name.
5. V: For there is suffering when he is wroth,
R: But life in his favour;
V: In the evening weeping,
R: But joy at morn.
6. V: As for me, I said in my prosperity:
"I shall never be moved!"
7. R: Through thy favour I was made to stand
upon my strong mountain;
V: Thou didst hide thy face,
R: I became dismayed.
8. V: Unto thee, O Lord, I cried,
R: And unto my God I made supplication:
9. V: "What profit is there in my blood
if I go down to corruption?
R: Will the dust give thee thanks?
Will it declare thy truth?"
10. V: Hear, O Lord, and have mercy on me,
R: O Lord, be thou my helper."
11. V: Thou hast turned my mourning
to dancing for me;
R: Thou hast loosed my sackcloth,
and hast girded me with joy,
12. V: That my heart may sing praise to thee,
and not be silent;
R: O Lord, my God,
I will give thanks to thee for ever.

PSALM 31

1. V: In thee, O Lord, I seek refuge,
R: Let me never be put to shame;
V: O do thou deliver me,
R: As thou art righteous.
2. V: Bow down thine ear unto me,
R: Haste thee, O Lord, save me;
V: Be to me a strong rock,
R: A house of defence to preserve me;
3. V: For my rock and defence art thou;
R: For thy name's sake lead me and guide me.
4. V: Bring me out of the net they have hid for me,
R: For thou, O Lord, art my refuge.
5. V: Into thy hand I commend my spirit,
R: Thou dost redeem me, O God of truth.
6. V: Thou hatest them that cleave to false idols,
R: But as for me, I trust in the Lord.
7. V: Let me rejoice and be glad in thy mercy,
Thou who didst see mine affliction,
R: And knewest the troubles of my soul.
8. V: Thou didst not deliver me into the hand of the enemy,
R: Thou didst set my feet in a large place.
9. V: Be gracious unto me, O Lord, for I am in trouble,
R: Mine eye wasteth away for grief;
10. V: For my life is spent with sorrow,
R: And my years with sighing,
V: My strength faileth through affliction,
R: My bones consume away.
11. V: Because of all mine adversaries I am become a reproach,
R: To my neighbours a terror, a fear to mine acquaintance.
V: They that see me without flee away from me.
12. R: I am forgotten as one dead, out of mind,
V: I am become like a destroyed vessel.
13. R: For I hear the defaming of many, terror all around,
V: While they take counsel together against me,
R: To take my life they plan.
14. V: As for me, in thee do I trust,
R: I say, "My God art thou."
15. V: In thine hand are my times, deliver me
R: From the hand of mine enemies and pursuers.
16. V: Make thy face to shine on thy servant,
R: Save me in thy lovingkindness.

PSALM 31 (cont.)

17. V: On thee have I called, let me not be ashamed;
R: Let the wicked be ashamed, and silenced in Sheol.
18. V: Strike dumb these lying lips,
R: So insolent in pride and scorn against the just.
19. V: How great is thy goodness, O Lord,
R: Which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee,
V: Which thou hast wrought for them that trust thee,
R: In the sight of the children of men!
20. V: Thou hidest them in the covert of thy wings,
from the calumnies of men;
R: Thou treasurest them in thy shelter,
from the strife of tongues.
21. V: Blessed be the Lord,
R: For wondrous favour shown me in desperate plight.
22. V: As for me, I said in my fear,
R: "I am cut off from before thine eyes."
V: But thou heardest the voice of my prayer,
R: When I cried unto thee for aid.
23. V: O love the Lord, all ye his saints,
R: The faithful doth the Lord preserve;
V: But plenteously doth he requite
R: Him that acteth proudly.
24. V: Be strong, and let your heart stand firm,
R: All ye that wait for the Lord.

PSALM 32
(One of the seven penitential psalms of the Church.)

1. V: Oh the bliss of him whose guilt is pardoned,
R: Whose sin is forgiven!
2. V: Oh the bliss of him whom the Lord has absolved,
R: Whose spirit has made full confession!
3. V: So long as I refused to own my guilt,
R: I moaned unceasingly, life ebbed away;
4. V: My body dried up, as in summer heat.
5. V: Then did I own my sin to thee,
R: Uncovering my iniquity;
V: And as I vowed I would confess,
R: Thou didst remit my sinful guilt.
6. V: So let each loyal heart in trouble pray to thee:
R: The floods my roar, but they will never reach him;
7. V: For thou wilt be his shelter,
R: Safeguarding him in peril, surrounding him with aid.
8. V: I will instruct thee and teach thee,
R: In the way thou shouldst walk;
V: I will counsel thee, guide thee,
R: On thee is mine eye.
9. V: Be not like to horse and mule,
R: Which have no understanding;
V: Whose mouths require a bit and bridle,
R: Else they will not come nigh thee.
10. V: Many are the sorrows of the wicked,
R: But he who trusteth in the Lord shall enjoy his favour.
11. V: Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous:
R: And shout for joy, all ye upright in heart.

Translations used: Moffatt, Smith, AV, Coverdale, Oesterley.

PSALM 33

1. V: Rejoice, O ye righteous, in the Lord,
R: For the upright praise is fitting.
2. V: Give thanks to the Lord with harp,
R: Sing praise with a ten-stringed lute;
3. V: Sing to him a new song,
R: Play skilfully, with a shout of joy.
4. V: For righteous is the word of the Lord,
R: And all his doing is in faithfulness;
5. V: He loveth righteousness and justice,
R: The earth is full of his lovingkindness.
6. V: By his word were the heavens made,
R: And by the breath of his mouth all their host;
7. V: He gathereth as in a bottle the sea waters,
R: He placeth the deeps in treasure-houses;
8. V: All the earth feareth the Lord,
R: All the dwellers of the world stand in awe of him;
9. V: For he spake, and it was done,
R: He commanded, and it stood fast.
10. V: The Lord counteracteth the purpose of nations,
R: He frustrateth the plans of the peoples;
11. V: His purpose standeth fast for ever,
R: The intents of his heart from generation to generation,
12. V: Blessed is the nation whose God is Yahweh,
R: The people whom he hath chosen for his inheritance,
13. V: From heaven the Lord looketh down,
R: He seeth all the children of men;
14. V: From the place of his dwelling he looketh forth
R: On all the dwellers on the earth;
15. V: He fashioneth altogether their heart,
R: He discerneth all their works.
16. V: No king is saved by a mighty host,
R: By great strength no warrior is preserved;
17. V: Vain is the horse for victory,
R: By its mighty strength it protecteth not.
18. V: Behold, the eye of the Lord is on them that fear him,
R: On them that look for his love,
19. V: To deliver their soul from death,
R: And to keep them alive from famine.
20. V: Our soul doth wait for the Lord,
R: Our help and our shield is he,
21. V: For in him our heart rejoiceth,
R: In his holy name we trust.
22. V: May thy love, O Lord, be upon us,
R: Even as we have waited for thee.

PSALM 34

An acrostic psalm. The sixth letter has, however, fallen out, probably through the carelessness of a copyist; and a final line has been added which does not belong to the original alphabetical scheme. Psalm divided into two clearly distinct parts; vv. 1-10, the psalmist's thanksgiving for deliverance from evil; vv. 11-21, written in the style of Wisdom Literature, gives instruction on honoring Yahweh. (Oesterley, op. cit., pp. 212-213)

In verse ten (end of first section) the reference to "young lions" in many of the versions comes in strangely when men are being spoken of. Accordingly, we have adopted the Septuagint rendering "wealthy men," so often used as synonymous with the wicked, as more likely to represent the original reading. Moffatt renders it "apostates."

1. V: I will bless the Lord at all times,
R: Continually shall his praise be in my mouth.
2. V: In the Lord shall my soul glory,
R: The humble shall hear, and be glad.
3. V: O magnify the Lord with me,
R: Let us exalt his name together.
4. V: I sought the Lord, and he answered me,
R: And from all my fears he delivered me.
5. V: Look unto him and be lightened,
R: And your faces shall not be ashamed.
6. V: This afflicted one cried, and the Lord heard,
R: And saved him out of all his troubles.
7. V: The angel of the Lord encampeth
R: Around them that fear him, and delivereth them.
8. V: O taste and see that the Lord is good,
R: Blessed is the man that trusteth him.
9. V: O fear the Lord, ye his saints,
R: For there is no want to them that fear him.
10. V: Wealthy men lack, and suffer hunger,
R: But they that seek the Lord lack not.

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11. V: Come, ye children, hearken unto me,
R: The fear of the Lord will I teach you.
 12. V: Who is the man that desireth life,
R: That loveth days, and to see prosperity?

PSALM 34 (cont.)

13. V: Keep thy tongue from evil,
R: And thy lips from uttering deceit;
14. V: Depart from evil, and do good,
R: Seek peace, and pursue it.
15. V: The eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous,
R: And his ears toward their cry;
16. V: The face of the Lord is against evil-doers,
R: To cut off their remembrance from the earth.
17. V: They cry, and the Lord heareth,
R: And from all their ills he delivereth them.
18. V: Near is the Lord to the heart-broken,
R: And he helpeth the crushed in spirit.
19. V: Many are the distresses of the righteous one,
R: But from all of them the Lord delivereth him;
20. V: He keepeth all his bones,
R: Not one of them is broken.
21. V: Evil slayeth the wicked one,
R: They that hate the righteous shall be punished.
22. V: The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants,
R: And none that trust in him shall be held guilty.

PSALM 35

1. V: Strive, O Lord, against them that strive with me,
R: Fight against them that fight against me.
2. V: Take hold of shield and buckler
and rise up for my help;
3. R: Unsheathe spear and battleaxe
to meet my pursuers.
V: Say to my soul,
R: "Thy help am I."
4. V: Let them be ashamed and dishonoured
who seek after my soul;
R: Let them be turned backward and confounded
who purpose evil against me;
5. V: Let them be as chaff before the wind,
with the angel of the Lord driving them on.
6. R: Let their way be dark and slippery,
with the angel of the Lord pursuing them;
7. V: For without cause have they hidden their net for me,
a pit have they dug;
8. R: And their net which they hid, may it catch them,
into the pit may they fall.
9. V: But may my soul exult in the Lord,
R: May it rejoice in his saving power;
10. V: Let all my bones say:
R: "O Lord, who is like thee,
V: Thou rescuer of the weak from stronger powers,
R: Thou rescuer of the wretched from destroyers!"
11. V: Witnesses of violence arise,
R: Of that which I know not they accuse me;
12. V: They requite me evil for good
R: To my soul's bereavement.
13. V: But I, when they were sick,
put on sackcloth,
R: I humbled my soul with fasting,
and my prayer returned to my mouth,
14. V: As though for my friend and brother.

V: I went about as one sorrowing for a mother,
R: Mournfully bowed down.
15. V: But when I stumbled they rejoiced and gathered together,
R: Gathered together against me,;
V: Like strangers whom I know not
they cry, and are not silent;
16. R: Like the godless they mock continually,
they gnash their teeth.

PSALM 35 (cont.)

17. V: Lord, how long wilt thou bear the sight?
R: Rescue my soul from them that roar,
V: Mine only one from the young lions.
18. V: [I will give thee thanks in the great congregation,
R: Among a mighty people will I praise thee.]
19. V: Let them not rejoice over me that are deceitful enemies,
R: That wink with their eyes.
20. V: For they speak not peace
R: To those peaceable in the land.
V: Words of deceit do they conceive,
21. R: They open wide their mouth,
V: They say, "Aha, aha,
our eyes have seen it!"
22. R: Thou sawest it, Lord, keep not silent,
be not far from me.
23. V: Stir up thyself, arouse thee for my cause,
R: My God, for my plea;
24. V: Judge me according to thy righteousness, O Lord,
R: And let them not rejoice over me.
25. V: Let them not say in their heart,
"Aha, our desire!"
R: Let them not say,
"We have swallowed him up!"
26. V: Let them be ashamed and dishonoured altogether
that rejoice at my hurt,
R: Let them be clothed with shame and disgrace
that magnify themselves against me.
27. V: Let them shout for joy that delight in my triumph,
R: And let them continually say:
V: "Magnified be the Lord, who hath pleasure
in the peace of his servant";
28. R: And let my tongue declare thy righteousness,
thy praise all the day.

The lines in brackets are apparently a later addition; they seem out of context.

PSALM 36

The personification of Transgression, as here set forth, is unique in the Psalms. It is represented as a demon who whispers temptation into the heart of him who is prepared to listen, i.e., the sinner.

The interpretation of the first two verses is acknowledged by all commentators to be exceedingly difficult. The Hebrew text is corrupt, meaningless. Following Oesterley (op. cit., p. 200), we adopt this interpretation: Transgression, personified, speaks within the heart of the sinner, telling him that God is indifferent to man's conduct. (Transgression's words to the sinner we have put within quotation marks.) Since it is immaterial to the Almighty whether men sin or not, they may sin as much as they like with impunity. Therefore, "the words of his mouth are wickedness and deceit"; indeed his whole course of conduct is evil.

In contrast to all this, the Psalmist proclaims Yahweh as he really is.

1. V: Oracle of Transgression to the wicked
in the depth of his heart:
R: "God hath no regard
for reverence for himself;
2. He maketh his eyes to overlook it,
so as not to discern the iniquity of my tongue."
3. V: Therefore the words of his mouth are wickedness and deceit,
R: He hath ceased to deal wisely, to do good,
4. V: He deviseth wickedness on his bed;

V: He setteth himself on a way that is not good,
R: Evil he abhorreth not.

5. V: O Lord, unto the heavens is thy love,
R: Thy faithfulness unto the skies;
6. V: Thy righteousness is like the mighty mountains,
R: Thy justice like the great deep;
V: Man and beast thou preservest,
7. R: O Lord, how precious is thy love!
V: The children of men come unto thee,
R: In the shadow of thy wings they seek refuge;
8. V: They drink their fill of the fatness of thy house,
R: Thou makest them to drink of the torrent of thy delights.
9. V: For with thee is the well of life,
R: And in thy light shall we see light.
10. V: Continue thy love to them that know thee,
R: And thy righteousness to the upright of heart.
11. V: Let not the foot of pride approach me,
R: Nor the hand of the wicked shake me.
12. V: May evildoers be appalled, may they fall,
R: May they be thrust down, and unable to rise.

PSALM 37

An acrostic psalm, but two lines (4 half - lines) go with each letter. Belongs to Wisdom type of literature; each couplet, as a rule, self-contained; style similar to that found in Book of Proverbs.

1. V: Be not enraged because of evildoers,
R: And be not envious of workers of unrighteousness;
2. V: For like grass do they speedily wither,
R: And fade away like the green herb.
3. V: Trust in the Lord and do good;
R: Inhabit the land and feed in security;
4. V: Take thy delight in the Lord,
R: And he will give thee thy heart's desire.
5. V: Commit thy way unto the Lord,
R: And trust him, and he will do it,
6. V: And he will bring forth thy righteousness as light,
R: And thy rectitude as the noonday.
7. V: Be still before the Lord,
R: And wait patiently for him.
V: Be not angered at him whose way doth prosper,
R: At the man who performeth evil devices.
8. V: Cease from anger, and forsake wrath,
R: Fret not thyself; it doth nothing but harm;
9. V: For evildoers shall be cut off,
R: But those who wait on the Lord shall inherit the land.
10. V: Yet a little, and the wicked is no more,
R: Thou wilt consider his place, but he is no more.
11. V: The meek shall inherit the land,
R: And shall delight in abundance of peace.
12. V: The wicked plotteth against the righteous,
R: And gnasheth against him his teeth.
13. V: The Lord doth laugh at him,
R: For he seeth his day is coming.

PSALM 37 (cont.)

14. V: The wicked have drawn the sword, they have bent their bow,
R: To cut down the afflicted, to slay the upright of life.
15. V: Their sword shall enter their heart,
R: And their bows shall be broken.
16. V: Better is a little that the righteous hath
R: Than great wealth of the wicked.
17. V: For the arms of the wicked shall be broken,
R: But the Lord upholdeth the righteous.
18. V: He knoweth the days of the perfect,
R: And their inheritance abideth for ever;
19. V: They shall not be ashamed in the evil time,
R: And in the days of famine they shall be satisfied.
20. V: But the wicked shall perish,
R: And the enemies of the Lord,
V: Like the burning of furnaces
R: Shall they vanish like smoke.
21. V: The wicked borroweth, and repayeth not,
R: But the righteous is gracious, and giveth.
22. V: For they whom he blesseth shall inherit the land,
R: But they whom he curseth shall be cut off.
23. V: From the Lord are the steps of man,
R: He establisheth him in whose way he delighteth;
24. V: Though he fall he shall not be cast headlong,
R: For the Lord upholdeth his hand.
25. V: I have been young, and now am old;
Yet never saw I the righteous forsaken,
R: Nor his seed begging their bread;
26. V: He is ever gracious and lendeth,
R: And his seed shall be for a blessing.
27. V: Depart from evil, and do good,
R: And dwell in the land for ever;
28. V: For the Lord is a lover of justice,
R: And will not forsake his godly ones.
29. V: The godless shall be destroyed for ever,
R: And the seed of the wicked shall be cut off.
V: The righteous shall inherit the land,
R: And shall dwell therein for ever.

PSALM 37 (cont.)

30. V: The mouth of the righteous murmureth wisdom,
R: And his tongue discourseth justice;
31. V: The law of his God is in his heart,
R: His footsteps shall not totter.
32. V: The wicked spieth upon the righteous,
R: And seeketh to slay him;
33. V: But the Lord will not abandon him to his power,
R: Nor condemn him when he stands in the judgment.
34. V: Wait for the Lord, and hold to him,
R: And he will save you from the godless;
V: He will exalt thee to inherit the land,
R: And to see the destruction of the wicked.
35. V: I saw the wicked exultant,
R: And raising himself up like the cedars of Lebanon;
36. V: I passed by, and behold, he was not,
R: I sought him, but he was not to be found.
37. V: Keep integrity, and foster uprightness,
R: For the latter end of the upright is peace;
38. V: But transgressors shall be destroyed altogether,
R: The end of the wicked be cut short.
39. V: The salvation of the righteous is from the Lord,
R: Their refuge in the time of trouble;
40. V: And the Lord doth help them and deliver them
R: From the wicked, for they trust in him.

PSALM 38

Numbered among the seven penitential psalms of the Church. One of the most deeply penitential of the psalms. Psalmist suffering from a grievous sickness, which he is convinced is a punishment for previous sins. Confesses his transgressions in deep contrition; pleads with Yahweh for help. From the description one gains the impression that he is suffering from some form of leprosy.

Metre, with few exceptions, is 3:3.

1. V: O Lord, punish me not in thy wrath,
R: And in thy fierce anger chasten me not.
2. V: For thine arrows pierce me,
R: And thine hand is heavy upon me.
3. V: There is no soundness in my flesh,
because of thine indignation,
R: Nor whdeness in my bones,
because of my sin.
4. V: For mine iniquities are gone over my head,
R: Like a burden, they are too heavy for me.
5. V: My wounds stink, they fester,
R: Because of my foolishness.
6. V: I am bowed down and prostrated greatly,
R: All the day I go about mourning;
7. V: For my loins are full of burning,
R: And there is no soundness in my flesh.
8. V: I am faint and greatly bruised,
R: I cry out for the groaning of my heart.
9. V: O Lord, before thee is all my longing,
R: And my sighing is not hid from thee.
10. V: My heart throbbed,
my strength hath failed me,
R: And the light of mine eyes is not with me.
11. V: My lovers draw off from before me,
R: And my neighbours stand afar off,
12. V: And they lay snares, they utter destructive things,
R: And meditate evil devices all the day.
13. V: And as for me, I am like a deaf man that heareth not,
R: And like a dumb man that openeth not his mouth;
14. V: Yea, I am like a man that heareth not,
R: And in whose mouth there are no reproofs;
15. V: But in thee do I hope, O Lord,
R: Thou wilt make answer, my God.

PSALM 38 (cont.)

16. V: For I think, "Else will they rejoice against me,
R: And boast over me when my foot slippeth."
17. V: For I am on the verge of giving way,
R: For my pain is continually with me;
18. V: Mine iniquity I confess,
R: I am harassed because of my sin.
19. V: And mine enemies assail me without cause,
R: And they that hate me falsely are many;
20. V: They render me evil
instead of good,
R: They are mine enemies because
I follow after good.
21. V: Forsake me not, Lord,
R: My God, be not far from me,
22. V: Haste thee to help me,
R: To rescue me, Lord,

PSALM 39

This psalm penitential in character but not reckoned among the "Penitential Psalms" of the Church.

1. V: I said, "I will take heed unto my words
that I sin not with my tongue;
I will put to my mouth a bridle
because of the wicked before me."
2. R: I was dumb in silence,
I held my peace from what was good.
V: But my feelings were stirred,
my heart was hot within me,
while I mused the fire kindled,
I spake with my tongue:
4. R: "Let me know, O Lord, mine end,
and the number of my days, what it is,
that I may see how transient I am;
5. Behold, handbreaths
hast thou made my days,
and my life is as nought before thee;
Surely as a vapour doth every man stand,
6. surely as a shadow man doth walk.
Riches he heapeth up, but knoweth not who will gather them."
7. V: And now what is my hope, O Lord?
R: My waiting is for thee;
8. V: From all my transgressions deliver me,
R: The reproach of the foolish make me not.
9. V: I am dumb, and open not my mouth,
R: For it was thy doing.
10. V: Take away from me thy stroke,
R: By the blows of thy hand I am perishing.
11. V: With rebukes for iniquity thou chastenest man;
Thou destroyest like a moth his beauty;
R: Surely a vain thing is every man.
12. V: Hear my prayer,
Give ear to my cry,
R: Be not deaf to my weeping;
V: For a stranger am I with thee,
R: A sojourner like all my fathers.
13. V: Look away from me that I may be cheered,
R: Before I go hence and be no more.

PSALM 40

We have here a combination of two independent psalms. Verses 13-17 occur elsewhere as Psalm 70. Verse 12 was evidently added by a redactor to form a link between the two psalms. The link, however, is none too appropriate.

Following Oesterley, "With my voice unto him I called" is added in the second part of the first verse in an attempt to supply what may have stood in the text originally. "That some words have fallen out seems likely as they are wanted for the balance of the line." (Op. cit., p. 253.)

1. V: I waited patiently for the Lord,
and he inclined unto me,
R: With my voice unto him I called,
and he heard my cry.
2. V: He brought me up from the pit of Sheol,
R: From the miry clay;
V: He set my feet upon a rock
R: Making firm my footsteps;
3. V: And he put in my mouth a new song,
R: A hymn of praise to our God;
V: That many might see this, and be awed,
R: And trust in the Lord.
4. V: Blessed is the man who maketh
the Lord his trust,
R: And turneth not to idolators,
and lying apostates.
5. V: Many hast thou wrought for us,
O Lord, of thy wondrous works,
R: And thy purposes to usward,--
there is none to compare with them;
V: Should I declare and speak of them,
R: They would be too many to number,
- 6a. V: Sacrifice and meal-offering thou desirest not,
6c. R: Whole burnt-offering and sin-offering thou askest not;
6b. V: Thou hast opened my ears;
7. R: Then said I, "Lo, I come."
V: In the volume of the Book it is written of me:
8. R: "I delight to do thy will, O God--
and thy law is in my heart."



PSALM 40 (Cont.)

9. V: I proclaim thy righteousness in the great assembly;
my lips I do not restrain, O Lord, thou knowest.
10. R: Thy righteousness I hide not within my heart,
thy faithfulness and succour I declare.
V: I do not conceal thy lovingkindness and mercy
R: Before the great assembly.
11. V: Thou, O Lord, wilt not withhold
thy tender mercies from me;
R: Thy love and thy truth
will ever preserve me.

12. V: For troubles encompass me beyond number,
Mine iniquities have overtaken me.
I am unable to bear them;
They are more than the hairs of my head,
And my heart hath failed me.

13. V: Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me,
R: Haste thee to help me.
14. V: Let them be put to shame and confounded together,
that seek after my soul;
R: Let them turn themselves backward and be brought to dishonour,
that desire my hurt;
15. V: Let them turn away in consequence of their shamefulness,
that say "Aha, aha!"
16. V: Let them rejoice and be glad in thee,
all that seek thee,
R: Let them say, "The Lord be magnified,"
that love thy salvation.
17. V: But I am poor and needy,
O God, haste thee to me;
R: My helper and my deliverer art thou,
my God, tarry not.

PSALM 41

The closing verse does not properly belong to this psalm; it is the benediction added by the final redactor at the close of each of the five books into which the Psalter was divided.

1. V: Blessed is he that considereth the poor and needy,
R: In the day of trouble the Lord delivereth him;
2. V: He preserveth him and keepeth him alive, that he may prosper
in the land,
R: And giveth him not over to the desire of his enemies.
3. V: The Lord upholdeth him on his bed of languishing,
R: All his pain thou turnest to strength.
4. V: As for me, I say, "Lord be gracious unto me,
R: Heal my soul, for I have sinned against thee."
5. V: Mine enemies speak evil concerning me:
R: "When shall he die, and his name perish?"
6. V: And when once cometh to see me he speaketh falsehood,
R: He gathereth mischief and uttereth it abroad.
7. V: All that hate me whisper together against me,
R: Against me do they devise my hurt;
8. V: A base thing do they pour out against me:
R: "Now that he lieth down let him rise up no more."
9. V: Even my familiar friend whom I trusted,
R: Who ate of my bread, hath magnified himself against me.
10. V: But thou, O Lord, be gracious unto me, and raise me up,
R: That I may render to them requital.
11. V: Hereby shall I know that thou favourest me,
R: That mine enemy exult not over me.
12. V: As for me, in mine integrity thou upholdest me,
R: And settest me up before thy face for ever.
13. V: BLESSED BE THE LORD, THE GOD OF ISRAEL,
FROM EVERLASTING TO EVERLASTING.
AMEN AND AMEN.

PSALMS 42 and 43

In many MSS these psalms are treated as one. Note the identical refrain in each as well as the similarity of thoughts.

PSALM 42

1. V: As the hart panteth
for water brooks,
R: So panteth my soul
for thee, O God.
2. V: My soul thirsteth for God,
the living God;
R: When shall I come and behold
the face of God?
3. V: My tears have been for me my food
day and night,
R: While they say to me all the day:
"Where is thy God?"
4. V: These things I ponder upon
R: And pour out my very self:
V: How I went into the tent of the Glorious One,
R: Into the house of God,
V: With the sound of joy and praise,
R: The clamour of the pilgrims.
5. VR: WHY ART THOU BOWED DOWN, MY SOUL,
AND GROANEST WITHIN ME?
WAIT FOR GOD, FOR I WILL YET THANK HIM,
THE HELP OF MY COUNTENANCE, AND MY GOD.
6. V: My soul is bowed down within me,
R: Therefore I think of thee
V: From the land of Jordan and the Hermons,
R: From the hill of Mizar.
7. V: Deep calleth unto deep
at the sound of thy cataracts;
R: All their waves and their billows
have passed over me.
8. V: By day the Lord orders his kindness,
R: And by night his song is with me,
V: A prayer to the God of my life.

PSALM 42 (Cont.)

9. V: I say unto God, my Rock:
"Why hast thou forgotten me?
R: Wherefore go I mourning,
while the enemy oppresseseth?"
10. V: Like a shattering in my bones,
mine enemies revile me,
R: While they say unto me all the day:
"Where is thy God?"
11. VR: WHY ART THOU BOWED DOWN, MY SOUL,
AND GROANEST WITHIN ME?
WAIT FOR GOD, FOR I WILL YET THANK HIM,
THE HELP OF MY COUNTENANCE, AND MY GOD.

PSALM 43

1. V: Judge me, O God,
and champion my cause
against an ungodly nation;
R: From men of deceit
and injustice deliver me.
2. V: For thou art the God of my strength,
R: Why has thou cast me off?
V: Wherefore go I mourning
R: While the enemy oppresseseth?
3. V: O send out thy light and thy truth,
let them lead me,
R: Let them bring me to thy holy hill,
and into thy dwelling-places,
4. V: That I may go unto the altar of God,
R: Unto the God of my joy,
V: That I may rejoice and praise thee with harp,
R: O God, my God.
5. VR: WHY ART THOU BOWED DOWN, MY SOUL,
AND GROANEST WITHIN ME?
WAIT FOR GOD, FOR I WILL YET THANK HIM,
THE HELP OF MY COUNTENANCE, AND MY GOD.

Translations chiefly used: JPSA, Powis Smith, Oesterley.

PSALM 44

1. V: O God, with our ears have we heard,
R: Our fathers have told unto us,
V: The work that thou didst in their days,
R: In the days of old by thy hand.
2. V: Nations thou didst drive out, and plantedst them in,
R: Didst afflict peoples, and settle them down;
3. V: For not by their sword did they possess the land,
R: Nor was their own arm victorious for them;
V: But thy right hand and thy strong arm,
R: And the light of thy countenance, for thou didst favour them.
4. V: Thou art my King and my God,
R: Thou commandest the victories of Jacob;
5. V: Through thee do we push back our adversaries,
R: And in thy name do we treat down those that rise up against us.
6. V: For not in my bow do I trust,
R: My sword doth not gain me the victory;
7. V: But thou makest us victorious over our foes,
R: And bringest to shame them that hate us.
8. V: We praise God every day,
R: To thy name will we give thanks evermore. Selah.
9. V: But thou hast cast us off, and brought us to shame,
R: And thou wentest not forth with our hosts;
10. V: Thou madest us turn back from the foe,
R: And they that hate us took spoil for themselves;
11. V: Thou gavest us for food like sheep,
R: Amidst the nations has thou scattered us;
12. V: Thou hast sold thy people for nought,
R: And madest no profit by their prices.
13. V: We are become a reproach to our neighbours,
R: A scorn and derision to those around us;
14. V: Thou hast made us a byword among the nations,
R: A wagging of the head among the peoples.
15. V: Every day is my dishonour before me,
R: And shame hath covered my face,
16. V: Because of the voice of the scorner and reviler,
R: Because of the presence of the enemy and avenger,
17. V: All this is come upon us, yet have we not forgotten thee,
R: Neither have we dealt falsely in thy covenant;
18. V: Our heart is not turned backward,
R: Nor our step declined from thy way;
19. V: Yet hast thou thrust us into the place of dragons,
R: And hast covered us with darkness.
20. V: Had we forgotten the name of our God,
R: And stretched out our hands to a strange god,

PSALM 44 (Cont.)

21. V: Would not God have searched out this?
R: For he knoweth the secrets of the heart.
22. V: Yea, for thy sake are we slain all the day,
R: We are accounted as sheep for slaughter.
23. V: Awake, Lord, wherefore sleepest thou?
R: Arise, cast us not off for ever!
24. V: Wherefore hidest thou thy face,
R: And forgettest our affliction and oppression?
25. V: For our soul is bowed down to the dust,
R: Our belly cleaveth to the ground.
26. V: Arise as a help for us,
R: And redeem us for thy love's sake.

PSALM 45

That this poem found a place in the Psalter is to be accounted for on much the same grounds as those that permitted the Song of Songs a place in the Canon.

It presents a picture of a royal wedding in ancient Palestine. The court poet is the singer. After a short preface, he addresses the king who is being wed; then the bride; then he refers to the bridal attendants; after which he closes with a final ascription to the king.

I have divided this psalm for responsive reading in such a way as to indicate the parts of the poem addressed to the different ones of the wedding party, rather than on the principle of parallelism. This arrangement should serve to clarify the psalm. Moreover, the thought parallelism is not particularly marked.

In spite of textual difficulties, there seems little doubt that the metre is four beats to a line.

1. VR: My heart is astir with goodly thought;
I will sing, even I, my song for the king--
My tongue is the pen of a skillful scribe;
2. V: "Fairer art thou than the sons of men,
Poured forth is grace upon thy lips;
Therefore hath God blest thee for ever.
3. Gird thee thy sword on thy side, O mighty one;
With thy pomp and splendour bemanter thy lions,
4. For the cause of truth, and for righteousness' sake,
And may thy right hand show forth terrible things.
5. May thine arrows so sharp strike the peoples with fear,
May the heart of thine enemies falter, O king.
6. Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever,
A sceptre of right is the sceptre of thy rule,
7. Thou hast loved justice and hated wickedness,
Therefore hath God, thy God, anointed thee
With the oil of gladness in the presence of thy companions.
8. Myrrh and aloes are all thy garments;
Harps of ivory--their strings give thee joy;
9. The daughter of kings cometh forth to greet thee,
A queen at thy right hand in gold gear from Ophir."
10. R: "Hearken, O daughter, incline thine ear,
Forget thy people and thy father's house;
11. Let him desire thy beauty, for he is thy lord.
12. Let him kneel before thee, Tyre's daughter, with gifts,
Let the wealthiest of peoples give honour to thee,
13. Give thee homage with corals in settings of gold."

PSALM 45 (Cont.)

14. V: Glad in gay garments are the maidens behind her,
Her companions who lead her before the king,
15. Who conduct her with gladness and joy to the palace.
16. R: "In place of thy fathers thou shalt have sons,
Thou shalt make them princes in all the earth.
17. I will keep in memory thy name in all generations,
Therefore the peoples will praise thee for ever."

PSALM 46

Eschatological. Belongs to the "Enthronement" group.

1. V: God is our refuge and strength,
R: A well-proved help in trouble.
2. V: Therefore will we not fear
though the earth be removed,
R: Thou the mountains be cast
into the midst of the sea;
3. V: Though the waters thereof
roar and be troubled,
R: Though the mountains shake
with the swelling thereof.
VR: THE LORD OF HOSTS IS WITH US;
THE GOD OF JACOB IS OUR HIGH TOWER. Selah.
4. V: There is a river whose streams make glad God's city,
R: The holiest habitation of the Most High.
5. V: God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved,
R: God will help her at break of dawn.
6. V: Nations rage, kingdoms are moved,
R: He uttereth his voice, the earth is dissolved.
7. VR: THE LORD OF HOSTS IS WITH US;
THE GOD OF JACOB IS OUR HIGH TOWER. Selah.
8. V: Come, behold, the works of the Lord,
R: The desolations he hath wrought on the earth;
9. V: He maketh wars to cease in all the world,
R: Breaking the bow, snapping the spear, burning the chariots.
10. V: Be still, and know that I am God,
R: Exalted among the nations, exalted on the earth.
11. VR: THE LORD OF HOSTS IS WITH US;
THE GOD OF JACOB IS OUR HIGH TOWER. Selah.

PSALM 47

An "Enthronement" psalm. Eschatological. Envisages the future as present. Sung during festival of Tabernacles in celebration of Yahweh's ascent upon his throne.

1. V: O clap your hands, all ye people,
R: Shout unto God with the voice of triumph;
2. V: For the Lord, the Most High, is terrible,
R: A great King over all the earth;
3. V: He subdueth peoples under us,
R: And nations under our feet;
4. V: He enlargeth for us our inheritance,
R: The pride of Jacob whom he loveth. Selah.
5. V: God ascendeth with a shout,
R: The Lord with a blast of the ram's horn.
6. V: Sing praises to God, sing praises,
R: Sing praises to our King, sing praises;
7. V: For the Lord is become King over all the earth,
R: Sing to God a choice song;
8. V: The Lord is become King over the nations,
R: He sitteth upon his holy throne;
9. V: The princes of the peoples are gathered together
R: With the people of the God of Abraham;
V: For to God belong the rulers of the earth;
R: He is greatly exalted!

PSALM 48

A psalm of thanksgiving for deliverance of Jerusalem from some peril, probably the siege by the army of Sennacherib (701 B.C.). Eschatological elements also present. At close of psalm the people are enjoined to form a procession, the ritual act of thanksgiving, and go "round about Zion," joyfully noting that her towers, ramparts, and palaces are all intact.

1. V: Great is the Lord,
and highly to be praised
in the city of our God,
on his holy hill;
2. R: A beautiful height,
the joy of all the earth;
the hill of Zion in the far north,
the city of the Great King.
3. V: God within her palaces
R: Hath made himself known as a refuge;
4. V: For, low, the kings assembled,
R: United together,
5. V: They beheld; then were they terrified,
R: Dismayed, put in fear;
6. V: Trembling took hold of them there,
R: Anguish, as of a woman in travail,
7. V: As the east wind wrecketh
R: The ships of Tarshish.
8. V: Like as we have heard, so have we seen,
R: In the city of our God,
V: In the city of the Lord of Hosts,
R: God doth establish it for ever. Selah.
9. V: We have thought, O God, of thy love,
R: In the midst of thy temple:
10. V: Thy fame shall echo, like thy name,
R: To the very ends of the earth;
V: Thy right hand is full of righteousness,
11. R: Let the hill of Zion rejoice;
V: Let the daughters of Judah be glad,
R: Because of thy judgments.
12. V: Go round about Zion, and encompass her,
R: Tell the number of her towers,
13. V: Take well heed of her ramparts,
R: Go through her palaces,
V: That ye may tell to a future generation
14. R: That this is God,
V: Our God for ever and ever;
R: He will guide us eternally.

PSALM 49

Psalm of Wisdom type. Hebrew text very corrupt in places. Commentators in disagreement. Metre: 3:3 generally.

Verse 8 an obvious addition to the original text--written in the margin by some pious copyist and inserted in the text itself by a later copyist. Verse 15 may also be a later addition. (Oesterley, op. cit., p. 266.)

1. V: Hear this, all ye peoples,
R: Give ear, all ye inhabitants of the world,
2. V: Bot of low degree and high degree,
R: Rich and poor together.
3. V: My mouth shall speak wisdom,
R: My heart's musing is of understanding.
4. V: Incline thine ear to a parable,
R: I will solve my dark saying with the harp.
5. V: Wherefore should I fear in the evil days,
R: When the iniquity of mine enemies encompasseth me,
6. V: Who trust in their wealth,
R: And boast of the abundance of their riches?
7. V: But no man can buy himself off,
R: Nor pay a ransom to God,
8. V: (Precious is the redemption of his soul,
R: He must cease from that for ever.)
9. V: And live for ever and ever,
R: And never see the Pit.
10. V: For he seeth that wise men die,
R: Both the foolish and intelligent perish,
V: And leave their wealth to others.
11. V: Graves are their houses evermore,
R: Their dwelling-places for ever and ever,
V: Though they call their lands their own.
12. V: But man abideth not in honour,
R: He is like the beasts that perish;
13. V: This is the fate of those who are so confident,
R: And the end of those who boast with their lips. Selah.
14. V: Like a flock of Sheol are they destroyed,
R: Death is their shepherd, and hath dominion over them.
V: In the field of Abaddon is their resting-place,
R: In the belly of Sheol is their dwelling;
15. V: (But God will redeem my soul
R: From the power of Sheol, for he will receive me. Selah.)

PSALM 49 (Cont.)

16. V: Look not upon one if he become rich,
R: If he increase the glory of his house,
17. V: For at his death he will take nothing away,
R: His glory will not descend after him.
18. V: Though while he liveth he blesseth his soul,
R: And men praise him because it goeth well with him,
19. V: He must join the generation of his fathers,
R: Nevermore will he see the light.
20. V: Man abideth not in honour,
R: He is like the beasts that perish.

PSALM 50

1. V: The Lord hath spoken and called the earth
R: From the rising of the sun unto its setting.
2. V: From Zion, the crown of beauty hath God appeared,
3. R: Our God cometh and is not silent.
V: A fire before him devoureth,
R: Around him it rageth mightily.
4. V: He calleth to the heavens above,
R: And to the earth, to judge his people:
5. V: "Gather to me my godly ones,
R: That have made a covenant with me with sacrifice."
6. V: Then the heavens declared his righteousness,
R: That God was giving judgment. Selah.
7. V: "Listen, O my people,
R: Let me speak, O Israel;
V: I would testify against you;
R: I am God, thy God.
8. V: Not because of thy sacrifices do I reprove thee,
R: Thy burnt-offerings are always before me.
9. V: I desire no bullock out of thine house,
R: Nor he-goats out of thy fold,
10. V: For mine are all the beasts of the forest,
R: The cattle upon a thousand hills;
11. V: I know all the fowls of the air,
R: And whatsoever moveth in the fields is mine;
12. V: If I were hungry I would not tell thee,
R: For the world is mine and the fullness thereof.
13. V: Do I eat the flesh of bulls,
R: Or drink the blood of goats?
14. V: Sacrifice to God a thank-offering,
R: And pay thy vows to the Most High;
15. V: And call upon me in the day of trouble,
R: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me."
16. V: But to the wicked man saith God:
"Is it thine to declare my statutes,
R: And to take my covenant on thy lips,
17. V: Thou that hatest correction,
R: And hast cast my words behind thee?
18. V: When thou seest a thief thou hast company with him,
R: And with adulterers is thy portion;
19. V: Thy mouth thou givest to evil,
R: And thy tongue frameth deceit;
20. V: Shamefully dost thou speak against thy brother,
R: Thy mother's son thou dost slander.

PSALMS 50 (Cont.)

21. V: These things hast thou done, and because I was silent,
R: Thou thoughtest that I was like thee;
V: But I will reprove thee,
R: And set it forth in thy sight.
22. V: Give heed to this, ye that forget God,
R: Lest I rend you, and there be none to deliver.
23. V: He who offereth thanksgiving honoureth me,
R: And to him who walketh uprightly will I show my salvation."
-

Translations used: Oesterley, AV, Coverdale, Moffatt, Powis Smith, JPSA.

PSALM 51

The most heart-searching of all the penitential psalms. One of the loftiest and most beautiful of all the psalms. No denunciation of others - a striking characteristic!

With few exceptions, the metre is 3:3.

1. V: Have mercy on me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness,
R: According to the abundance of thy tender mercies
Blot out my transgressions.
2. V: Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity,
R: And cleanse me from my sin.
3. V: For I acknowledge my transgressions,
R: And confess my sin continually.
4. V: Against thee, thee only, have I sinned,
R: And done that which is evil in thy sight,
V: Thus art thou in the right when thou speakest,
R: And pure when thou givest judgment.
5. V: Behold, in iniquity was I brought forth,
R: And in sin did my mother conceive me.
6. V: Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts,
R: And makest me to know wisdom in the innermost being.
7. V: Purge me with hyssop that I may be clean,
R: Wash me that I may be whiter than snow.
8. V: Fill me with joy and gladness,
R: That the bones which thou hast crushed may rejoice.
9. V: Hide thy face from my sins,
R: And blot out all mine iniquities.
10. V: Create in me a clean heart, O God,
R: And renew a steadfast spirit within me.
11. V: Cast me not from thy presence,
R: And take not thy holy spirit from me;
12. V: Restore unto me the joy of thy help,
R: And sustain me with a willing spirit.
13. V: Then will I teach transgressors thy ways,
R: That sinners may turn unto thee.
14. V: Deliver me from silence, O God,
R: That my tongue may sing aloud of thy righteousness;
15. V: O Lord, open thou my lips,
R: And my mouth shall show forth thy praise;
16. V: For thou delightest not in sacrifice,
R: And should I give burnt-offering thou wouldst not be pleased;
17. V: My sacrifice is a broken spirit;
R: A broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

PSALM 51 (Cont.)

18. V: In thy favour show good unto Zion;
R: Build thou the walls of Jerusalem.
19. V: Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness,
R: Then on thy altar shall bullocks be slain.
-

Patently these last four lines (verses 18,19) formed no part of the original psalm. The last two lines (verse 19), so utterly different from the spirit of the psalm itself, definitely mark these verses as a later addition.

Translations used: Oesterley, AV, Smith, Moffatt, JPSA

PSALM 52

1. V: Why boastest thou thyself in evil,
R: O powerful one, against the godly man?
V: All the day
2. thou devisest destruction,
R: Thy tongue is like a sharpened razor.
3. V: Thou lovest evil more than good,
R: Lying more than righteousness. Selah.
4. V: Thou lovest all destructive words,
R: O thou deceitful tongue;
5. V: Therefore God will destroy thee for ever:
R: He will seize thee and pluck thee out of thy tent,
and uproot thee from the land of the living. Selah.
6. V: The righteous will see it and be awed,
R: Then will they laugh at him and cry:
7. V: "So this the man who would not make God his strength,
R: But trusted in the abundance of his riches,
and strengthened himself in his wealth!"
8. V: But I am like a green olive tree in God's house;
R: I trust in God's kindness for ever and ever.
9. V: I will praise thee for ever for what thou has done,
R: And proclaim thy name good in the presence of thy saints.

Translations used: Oesterley, AV, Coverdale, Smith, Moffatt,
JPSA.

PSALM 53

For the most part this psalm is identical with Psalm 14. The exception is verse 5.

The first three verses refer to the godless in general. Then in verses 4 and 5 the psalmist denounces in particular the priesthood ("they eat the bread of God"), those who should be the religious leaders of the people. Textual corruption makes verse 5 particularly difficult; both singular and plural pronouns are used in the Hebrew text. Following Oesterley, we have taken verse four to refer to the priesthood in general, while in verse five the High Priest is singled out for an especial blast; he is particularly responsible and therefore particularly blameworthy.

In the final verse the psalmist turns from this lamentable picture to envisage the future, praying for the restoration of his people.

1. V: The fool saith in his heart:
R: "There is no God!"
V: They act basely and abominably,
R: There is none that doeth good.
2. V: God looketh down from heaven
R: Upon the children of men,
V: To see if there are any that act wisely,
R: That seek after God.
3. V: Every one of them is gone back,
R: They are altogether become corrupt,
V: None doeth good,
R: No, not even one.
4. V: Have the workers of iniquity no knowledge?
R: They devour my people;
V: They eat the bread of God,
R: But call not upon his name.
5. V: Is it not a terrible thing!
for God doth scatter his bones;
R: The profane one is brought to shame,
for God hath rejected him.
6. V: O for the salvation of Israel from Zion,
R: When God bringeth back the restoration of his people;
V: Jacob shall rejoice,
R: Israel shall be glad.

PSALM 54

1. V: O God, by thy name save me,
R: And by thy power vindicate me;
2. V: O God, hear my prayer,
R: Give ear to the words of my mouth;
3. V: For the proud are risen against me,
R: And godless tyrants seek my life. Selah.
4. V: Behold, God is my helper,
R: The Lord is my supporter;
5. V: May he requite the evil to my foes,
R: In thy faithfulness destroy them.
6. V: I will freely sacrifice unto thee,
R: I will praise thy name, for it is good;
7. V: For it hath delivered me from all trouble,
R: And mine eye gloateth over my foes.

Translations used: AV, Coverdale, Smith, Oesterley.

PSALM 55

This psalm presents unusual difficulties, both of text and interpretation. There is repeated shifting of personal pronoun and of point of view. Many commentators hold the psalm to be composite--which, under the circumstances, is not surprising. There is a noticeable gap between verses fourteen and fifteen, the latter part of one and the former part of the other having fallen out, together, perhaps, with several lines in between. In the light of these difficulties, the proper translation of this psalm is highly conjectural.

1. V: Give ear, O Lord, to my prayer,
R: And hide thee not from my petition.
2. V: Take heed unto me, and hear me,
R: How I mourn in my prayer, and am vexed.
3. V: Because of the ~~wice~~ of the enemy,
R: Because of the oppression of the wicked;
V: For they cast mischief upon me,
R: And in anger they persecute me.
4. V: My heart doth writhe within me,
R: And the terrors of death are fallen upon me.
5. V: Fear and trembling are come upon me,
R: And horror hath overwhelmed me.
6. V: Oh for the wings of a dove
to fly afar and be at rest!
7. R: Fain would I fly from it all,
and lodge within the desert!
8. V: I would haste to my refuge
R: From the blast of the storm.
9. V: Destroy, O Lord, and divide their tongue;
R: For I have seen violence and strife in the city.
10. V: Day and night they encircle her upon her walls;
R: Mischief also and sorrow are in the midst of her.
11. V: Wickedness is in the midst thereof;
R: Deceit and guile depart not from her streets.
12. V: It is not taunts of a foe--that I could bear;
R: It is not an enemy's insolence--then I could hide from him;
13. V: But it is thou, a man mine equal,
R: My companion, and my familiar friend.
14. V: We took sweet counsel together,
R: In the house of God we walked with the throng.
15. V: May he go to perdition!
R: Death seize all such!
V: May they go living to the world below,
R: Swept off as their sins deserve!

PSALM 55 (cont.)

16. V: As for me, I will call upon God;
R: And the Lord will deliver me.
17. V: Evening, morning, and at noon
R: I will sigh and moan, that he may hear my voice;
18. V: That he may deliver me safely from my foes,
R: Though many there be against me.
19. V: May God hear and afflict them,
R: He that dwelleth from of old.
V: Which keep no oath,
R: Nor fear they God.
20. V: He hath put forth his hand against his confederates,
R: He hath defiled his covenant.
21. V: His mouth was smoother than butter,
R: While war was in his heart;
V: Softer than oil were his words,
R: Yet were they drawn swords.
22. V: Cast thy burden upon the Lord
and he will sustain thee.
R: He will never suffer
the righteous to be moved.
23. V: But thou, O God, wilt bring them down into the pit of destruction;
R: Men of blood and deceit shall not live out half their days.
V: But I will trust in thee, O Lord.

Translations used: AV, JPSA, Powis Smith, Moffatt, Cesterley, Coverdale.

PSALM 55

(Alternative arrangement)

1. V: Give ear, O Lord, to my prayer,
R: And hide thee not from my petition.
2. V: Take heed unto me, and hear me,
R: How I mourn in my prayer, and am vexed.
3. V: Because of the voice of the enemy,
R: Because of the oppression of the wicked;
V: For they cast mischief upon me.
R: And in anger they persecute me.
4. V: My heart doth write within me,
R: And the terrors of death are fallen upon me.
5. V: Fear and trembling are come upon me,
R: And horror hath overwhelmed me.
6. V: O for the wings of a dove
to fly afar and be at rest!
7. R: Fain would I fly from it all,
and lodge within the dessert!
8. V: I would haste to my refuge
R: From the blast of the storm.
9. V: Destroy, O Lord, and divide their tongue;
R: For I have seen violence and strife in the city.
10. V: Day and night they encircle her upon her walls;
R: Mischief also and sorrow are in the midst of her.
11. V: Wickedness is in the midst thereof;
R: Deceit and guile depart not from her streets.
12. V: It is not taunts of a foe--that I could bear;
R: It is not an enemy's insolence--then I could hide from him.
13. V: But it is thou, a man mine equal,
R: My companion, and my familiar friend;
14. V: We took sweet counsel together,
R: In the house of God we walked with the throng.
15. V: May he go to perdition!
R: Death seize all such!
V: May they go living to the world below,
R: Swept off as their sins deserve!
20. V: For he hath put forth his hand against his friends,
R: He hath profaned friendship's bond.
21. V: His talk was smoother than butter,
R: While war was in his heart;
V: Softer than oil were his words,
V: Yet were they drawn swords.

PSALM 55 (cont.)

16. V: As for me, I will call upon God,
and the Lord will deliver me.
17. R: Evening, morning, and at noon
I will sigh and moan, that he may hear my voice;
18. V: That he may deliver me safely from my foes,
R: Though they there be against me.
19. V: May God hear and afflict them,
R: He that dwelleth from of old,
V: Which keep no oath,
R: Nor fear they God.
23. V: Thou, O God, wilt bring them down into the pit of destruction;
R: Men of blood and deceit shall not live out half their days,
V: But I will trust in thee, O Lord.
22. V: Cast thy burden upon the Lord and he will sustain thee.
R: He will never suffer the righteous to be moved.
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For the above order of verse we are indebted to Moffatt.

PSALM 56

1. V: O God!
Have mercy on me, for man trampleth me down,
R: Every day doth the warrior oppress me.
2. V: Watchers do ever oppress me,
R: For many war against me.
3. V: Uplift me in the day that I fear;
R: I will trust in thee.
4. VR: IN GOD I WILL CARRY MY CAUSE TO ITS END;
IN GOD DO I TRUST, FEARLESS;
WHAT SHALL FLESH DO UNTO ME?
5. V: Ever they speak, they take counsel,
R: Against me are all their thoughts.
6. V: For evil they lurk, they spy on me,
R: They watch my steps.
V: As they have longed for my life,
7. R: Heed their iniquity.
VR: IN GOD I WILL CARRY MY CAUSE TO ITS END;
IN GOD DO I TRUST, FEARLESS;
WHAT SHALL FLESH DO UNTO ME?
8. V: O count thou my restless tossings,
R: Set my tears before thee.
9. V: Then shall my foes turn back,
R: In the day when I cry unto thee.
V: This I know, that God is mone, . . .
10. VR: IN GOD I WILL CARRY MY CAUSE TO ITS END;
11. IN GOD DO I TRUST, FEARLESS
WHAT SHALL FLESH DO UNTO ME?
12. V: Unto thee, O God, will I pay my vows;
R: Unto thee will I give thanks.
13. V: For thou hast delivered my soul from death,
R: Thou hast kept my feet from stumbling.
V: That I might walk before God in the light of life . . .
VR: IN GOD WILL I CARRY MY CAUSE TO ITS END;
IN GOD DO I TRUST, FEARLESS;
WHAT SHALL FLESH DO UNTO ME?

In a few places (indicated by . . .) words have fallen out of the text. We have followed Iesterley in the placement of the refrains. Translations chiefly used: Oesterley and Coverdale.

PSALM 57

We have here fragments of two psalms welded together by a later redactor in an attempt to form a unified whole. The welding was not too expertly done!

1. V: Grant me favour, O God, grant me favour!
for in thee hath my soul trusted.
R: And in the shadow of thy wings am I secure
until the calamities be overpast.
2. V: I cry to God Most High
R: To God who bestoweth good on me.
3. V: May he send from heaven and save me,
R: May he put to shame them that crush me. Selah.
V: May God send his love and his truth,
4. and deliver my soul.
- V: In the midst of lions I lay me down;
R: Blazing with hate are the sons of men.
5. V: BE HIGH OVER THE HEAVENS, O GOD;
R: UPON ALL THE EARTH BE THY GLORY.
6. V: A net have they spread for my feet,
R: They have bent down my soul.
V: They have dug before me a pit;
R: They have fallen therein. Selah.
7. V: Firmly fixed is my heart, O my God;
R: Firmly fixed is my heart.
V: I would sing and give praise!
8. R: Awake, O my lyre.
V: Awake, lute and lyre,
R: I would waken the dawn!
9. V: I will praise thee among the peoples, O Lord,
R: Hymn thee among the nations.
10. V: For great unto the heavens is thy love,
R: And unto the skies thy truth.
11. V: BE HIGH OVER THE HEAVENS, O GOD;
R: UPON ALL THE EARTH BE THY GLORY.

PSALM 58

A psalm in denunciation of evil rulers who claim devine rank.

1. V: Do ye really speak what is right, O gods?
R: Do ye jedge mankind impartially?
2. V: Nay, but in the heart ye work wickedness,
R: And on earth your hands weave violence.
3. V: The wicked go astray from the womb;
R: They wander from birth, speakers of lies.
4. V: They have poison like a serpent,
R: As a deaf cobra that stoppeth its ears;
5. V: That heedeth not the voice of the charmers,
R: Of the most cunning binder of spells.
6. V: O God, crush their teeth in their mouth,
R: The fangs of the young lion uproot.
7. V: May they vanish as waters that pass away,
R: As grass by the path let them wither.
8. V: As the snail that passeth in slime,
R: As a woman's abortion, let them see not the sun.
9. V: Before they know it, may He cut them down as a bramble;
R: As with wind in fury may He sweep them away.
10. V: Let the righteous be glad when he seeth vengeance;
R: Let him wash his feet in the blood of the wicked.
11. V: And let mankind say, "Surely the righteous hath fruit,
R: Yea, there is a God that judgeth in the earth."

PSALM 59

1. V: Deliver me from my foes, O my God;
defend me from them that rise up against me.
2. R: Deliver me from workers of iniquity;
and from men of blood save me.
3. V: For behold! they lie in ambush for my life,
R: Strong ones act presumptuously against me.
V: No transgression or sin is mine;
4. R: For no wrong of mine do they array them.
V: Rouse thee to meet me, and look,
5. R: Seeing that thou art the God of Israel.
V: Awake, to punish all nations,
R: To vile traitors show no favour. Selah.
6. VR: THEY COME BACK AT EVEN,
THEY GROWL AS DOGS,
AND GO ABOUT THE CITY.
7. V: Behold! they slaver with their mouth;
R: A sword is in their lips.
8. V: But thou dost mock at them,
R: Thou holdest all nations in derision.
9. VR: O MY STRENGTH, TO THEE WILL I SING PRAISE;
FOR THOU, O GOD, ART MY FORTRESS.
10. V: My loving God shall meet me;
R: God shall let me look on mine adversaries.
11. V: Slay them not, lest my people forget;
R: Shake them by thy power, and bring them down,
O Lord, our shield.
12. V: For the sin of their mouth, the word of their lips,
may they be caught in their arrogance;
R: And for the curse and the spell they repeat,
13. destroy them in thy wrath that they be no more.
V: And let them know that God ruleth in Jacob,
R: Unto the ends of the earth. Selah.
14. VR: THEY COME BACK AT EVEN,
THEY GROWL AS DOGS,
AND GO ABOUT THE CITY.
15. V: They wander for food;
R: If they be not sated, they murmur.
16. V: But I will sing of thy might,
R: Exult loudly at morn in thy love.
V: For thou hast been my fortress,
R: And a refuge in the day of my affliction.
17. VR: O MY STRENGTH! TO THEE WILL I SING PRAISE,
FOR THOU, O GOD, ART MY FORTRESS,
MY LOVING GOD . . .

PSALM 60

This psalm is in the form of a brief "liturgy," beginning and ending with national complaints, while the central portion consists of a devine oracle. This oracle, it is interesting to note, consists of three member lines, while the rest of the psalm has the normal two-member lines. "In practice we may imagine it to have been spoken by a temple prophet, acting as the mouthpiece of God." (Cesterley, op. cit., p. 298.) This oracle may be older than the rest of the psalm. These considerations have prompted us to assign the entire brief oracle to the leader, while the remainder of the psalm is said responsively.

1. V: O God! thou hast spurned us and broken us;
R: Thou hast been angry with us; turn back to us!
2. V: Thou hast shaken the earth, rent it open;
R: Oh, heal its breaches for it tottereth.
3. V: Thou hast shown thy people a hard fate,
R: Thou hast made them drink wine of reeling.
4. V: Grant a refuge to them that fear thee,
R: That they may flee before the bow. Selah.
5. V: That thy beloved may escape,
R: Save with thy right hand and answer us.
6. V: God hath spoken in his sanctuary:
"I will exult, I will divide Shechem as spoil,
and the Vale of Sukkoth will I measure out.
7. Gilead is mine, and mine Manasseh,
and Ephraim my chief fortress,
Judah my marshal's staff.
8. Moab is my washpot,
over Edom will I cast my shoe,
over Philistia do I raise a shout."
9. V: Oh that one would bring me to a strong city!
R: Oh that one would lead me even unto Edom!
10. V: Hast thou not spurned us, O God?
R: And goest not forth in our hosts?
11. V: Give us help against the adversary,
R: Seeing that man's salvation is vain.
12. V: Through our God could we do feats of valour,
R: And he would trample down our adversaries.

Escept for a few minor changes in which we have followed the AV, Coverdale, Smith, Moffatt, et al., the above translation is according to Oesterley.

PSALM 61

Written by one in exile appealing to the Almighty for help and comfort.

1. V: Hear my cry, O God,
R: And heed my prayer;
2. V: From earth's far end I call to thee,
R: As my heart faints.
V: When troubles are too strong for me,
R: Do thou direct me,
3. V: O thou who art my refuge,
R: A fortress against the foe.
4. V: Oh to be a guest of thine for ever!
R: Oh to be sheltered underneath thy wings!
5. V: For thou hearest my vows, O God,
R: Thou grantest the desire of reverent men.

6. V: Add many a day to the life of the king,
R: Till his years are age on age.
7. V: May he sit on his throne before God for all time!
R: Bid thy love and loyalty safeguard him.
8. V: And I will ever sing thy praise,
R: Paying my vows through all my days.

Moffatt's translation is used in the above psalm as best preserving the parallelism and metre.

PSALM 62

Interpretation of this psalm fraught with difficulties--difficulties increased by the uncertainty of the text in several of the verses.

The psalmist is evidently a leader of the orthodox party, an upholder of ancient tradition. He is opposed by innovators, whose unscrupulous action endanger his position.

The metre is variable, exceedingly so, owing in all probability to the work of several editors.

1. VR: TRULY MY SOUL WAITETH UPON GOD;
FROM HIM COMETH MY SALVATION.
2. HE ONLY IS MY ROCK AND MY SALVATION;
HE IS MY DEFENCE: I SHALL NOT BE GREATLY MOVED.
3. V: "How long will ye set upon a man?
R: Will ye slay one like a falling wall?"
4. V: Yea, from his position they take counsel to thrust him.
R: They delight in lying;
V: Blessings are on their lips,
R: But curses in their heart. Selah.
5. VR: TRULY MY SOUL WAITETH UPON GOD;
FROM HIM COMETH MY SALVATION.
6. HE ONLY IS MY ROCK AND MY SALVATION;
HE IS MY DEFENCE; I SHALL NOT BE GREATLY MOVED.
7. V: In God is my salvation and my glory:
R: The rock of my strength and my refuge, is in God.
8. V: Trust in him at all times, O ye people;
R: Pour out your heart before him, for God is our refuge. Selah.
9. V: Truly, vanity are they of low degree,
Deception are they of high degree,
In the balances they will go up.
10. R: Trust not in oppression,
Put no vain hope in robbery,
When wealth increaseth
Rely not thereon.

PSALM 62 (cont.)

11. V: Once hath God spoken,
Twice have I heard this,
That power belongeth unto God.
12. R: Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy,
For thou dost recompense
A man according to his work.
-

Translations used: AV, Coverdale, Oesterley, Smith.

PSALM 63

The psalm of an exile in Babylon expressing his ardent yearning for the presence of God. The king referred to is evidently Jehoiachin, the psalmist's fellow-exile. At the very end occurs the obscure line, "The mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped." Moffatt regards it as a later interpolation. In any case, it is no improvement to the psalm, but, on the contrary, serves as an anti-climax; therefore we have omitted it from this arrangement.

1. V: O Lord, my God, I seek thee;
R: My soul thirsteth for thee,
V: My flesh longeth for thee,
R: In a dry land where no water is;
2. V: Even as when in the sanctuary I beheld thee,
R: And saw thy might and thy majesty;
3. V: For better than life is thy love;
R: My lips shall praise thee;
4. V: Yea, I will bless thee as long as I live,
R: In thy name will I lift up my hands;
5. V: As with fat and marrow
R: My soul thou dost satisfy,
V: With joyful lips
R: My mouth shall sing praise;
6. V: When I remember thee upon my bed,
R: And meditate on thee in the night watches;
7. V: For thou hast been my help,
R: And in the shadow of thy wings do I rejoice,
8. V: My soul cleaveth unto thee,
R: Thy right hand doth uphold me.
9. V: But they that seek after my life
R: Shall go into the lowest parts of the earth;
10. V: They shall fall by the sword,
R: They shall be a portion for jackals.
11. V: But the king shall rejoice in the Lord,
R: Every one that sweareth by him shall glory.

Translations chiefly used: Oesterley, AV.

PSALM 64

Short as this psalm is, it has suffered considerable textual corruption. Particularly is this true of verse six. No two translators agree. Oesterley gives it up as a bad job, leaves this verse blank. Accordingly the translation of this verse as given below, as is true of any of the translation, is purely conjectural.

1. V: Hear my voice, O God, in my complaint;
R: Preserve my life from the terror of the enemy.
2. V: Hide me from the council of evildoers,
R: From the tumult of the workers of iniquity,
3. V: Who whet their tongue like a sword,
R: Who sharpen like arrows bitter words,
4. V: To shoot in concealment at the innocent;
R: Suddenly do they shoot when they are not seen.
5. V: They strengthen themselves in an evil purpose;
They dig that they may hide snares;
R: They say, "Who will see them?"
6. V: They have thought out their plans well
R: With great cunning and craft.
7. V: But God shall shoot at them with an arrow;
R: Suddenly shall they be wounded.
8. V: Yea, their own tongues shall cause them to stumble,
R: So that all who see them shall wag their heads;
9. V: All who see it shall say, "This hath God done,"
R: They shall perceive that it is his work.
10. V: The righteous shall be glad in the Lord,
R: And all the upright in heart shall glory.

Chief translations used: JPSA, Oesterley, Coverdale, AV, Moffatt.

PSALM 65

This psalm consists of two parts: vv. 1-8 and vv. 9-13. The former is a hymn of praise and gratitude to God for his lovingkindness and power; the latter is a self-contained and beautiful hymn of gratitude for a bounteous harvest. It is probable that we have here a joining of two psalms.

In verses 9-10 is an allusion to the ancient naive belief that God had a river in the heavenly spheres, ever full of water, from which he dispensed rain upon the earth.

1. V: Praise befits thee, O God, in Zion;
R: And unto thee are vows fulfilled.
2. V: O thou that hearest prayer,
R: Unto thee doth all flesh come.
3. V: If our transgressions overwhelm us,
R: Thou dost cover them over.
4. V: Blessed is he whom thou choosest and acceptest,
R: That he may dwell in thy courts;
V: We will delight ourselves with the goodness of thy house,
R: The holiness of thy sanctuary.
5. V: By awe-inspiring deeds dost thou answer in righteousness,
R: O God of our salvation,
V: Thou the confidence of all the ends of the earth,
R: And the far distant isles.
6. V: Who settest fast the mountains by his strength,
R: Girded about with might,
7. V: Who stillest the roaring of the seas,
R: The roaring of their waves.
8. V: Dwellers at the world's far end are awed at the proofs of thy power,
R: And lands of sunrise and of sunset sing joyfully of thee.
9. V: Thou hast visited the earth, and watered it,
R: Greatly dost thou enrich it;
V: Through the river of God,
Which is full of water,
Thou preparest the grain thereof;
Yea, thus thou preparest it:
10. R: Watering the furrows thereof,
Levelling the ridges thereof,
Thou makest it soft with showers,
Thou blessest the growth thereof.
11. V: Thou crownest the year with thy goodness,
R: And thy wagons drip with fatness;
12. V: The meadows of the plain shout for joy,
R: The hills are girded with gladness;
13. V: The pastures are clothed with flocks,
R: And the valleys are covered with grain;
V: They shout for joy, yea, they sing.

PSALM 66

Beginning with verse 13 there seems to be an entire change of subject-matter. Probably two psalms: vv. 1-12 and 13-20.

1. V: Shout for joy unto God, all the earth,
2. Sing praise to the glory of his name,
Render unto him the praise due to him;
3. R: Say unto God:
"How terrible are thy works!
Because of the greatness of thy might
Thine enemies cringe before thee,
4. V: Let all the earth worship thee,
R: Sing praise to thee, sing praise to thy name!" Selah.
5. V: Come, and behold
the works of God,
R: Terrible in deed
toward the children of men:
6. V: Turning the sea to dry land,
R: They went through the river on foot;
V: There did they rejoice in him;
7. R: Ruling in his strength for ever,
V: His eyes keeping watch on the nations,
R: That the rebellious exalt not themselves.
8. V: Bless, O ye peoples, our God,
R: Make the sound of his praise to be heard,
9. V: Who preserveth our soul in life,
R: And suffereth not our foot to be moved.
10. V: For thou hast tried us, O God,
R: Thou hast tested us as silver is tested;
11. V: Thou didst bring us into the net,
R: Didst lay a chain upon our loins,
12. V: Thou didst cause men to ride over our head,
R: We went through fire and water,
V: But thou didst bring us into a wide place.
13. V: I will come into thy house with whole burnt-offerings,
R: I will pay my vows unto thee,
14. V: Which my lips did utter,
R: And my mouth did speak, when I was in trouble;
15. V: Whole burnt-offerings of fatlings will I offer unto thee,
R: With the incense of rams,
V: I will offer bullocks with goats. Selah.

PSALM 66 (cont.)

16. V: Come, hearken, all ye that fear God,
R: And I will tell you what he hath done for my soul:
17. V: Unto him did I cry with my mouth,
R: And high praise was under my tongue--
18. V: If I had harboured iniquity in my heart,
R: The Lord would not have heard me--
19. V: But God hath heard me,
R: He hath hearkened unto the voice of my prayer,
20. V: Blessed be God, who hath not rejected my prayer,
R: Nor turned away his kindness from me.
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Chief translations used: Oesterley, Coverdale, Smith.

PSALM 67

A short but beautiful psalm striking a high note of universality. A harvest festival poem, pouring forth gratitude to God for abundant yield of crops. Probably one of psalms sung during Feast of Tabernacles.

In the Book of Common Prayer this psalm is appointed to be said or sung as an alternative to the Nunc Dimittis.

1. V: O God,--may he be gracious unto us and bless us,
R: May he cause his face to shine upon us. Selah.
2. V: That his ways may be known on earth,
R: His saving health among all nations;
3. V: Let the peoples thank thee, O God,
R: Let all the peoples thank thee;
4. V: Let the nations rejoice and shout for joy,
R: For thou judgest the world in righteousness;
V: Thou judgest the peoples with equity,
R: And guidest the nations of the earth. Selah.
5. V: Let the peoples thank thee, O God,
R: Let all the peoples thank thee;
6. V: The earth hath yielded her increase,
R: The Lord our God hath blessed us.
7. V: May God bless us,
R: And may all the ends of the earth fear him!

Translations chiefly used: Oesterley; Smith and JPSA

PSALM 68

This psalm offers insuperable difficulties of translation and interpretation; accordingly, of arrangement for responsive reading. It has neither unity nor coherence. It is a collection of sentences and phrases taken from a variety of different poems and strung together haphazardly. The problem is further complicated by the fact that in some places phrases and clauses have dropped out of the text completely. At those points the translator must needs guess at the translation.

1. V: God ariseth! Let his foes be scattered!
R: Let them that hate him flee before him.
2. V: As smoke is driven by the wind, as wax melts at the fire,
R: So let the wicked perish before God.
3. V: But let the righteous be glad and rejoice before God;
R: Yea, let them exceedingly rejoice.
4. V: Sing unto God, hymn his name,
Extol him that rideth upon the clouds;
R: Yah is his name; exult ye before him.
5. V: The orphan's father,
The widow's judge,
Is God in his holy dwelling.
6. R: God restoreth the lonely to a home,
Bringeth out prisoners into prosperity.
But the rebellious dwell in the white-hot land.
7. V: O God, when thou didst go forth before thy people,
R: When thou didst march through the desert, Selah.
8. V: Earth quaked, yea, the heavens dripped, before God;
R: Yon Sinai before God, the God of Israel.
9. V: O God, thou didst pour down a generous rain,
R: Reviving thy land as it languished;
10. V: Thy household was settled there,
R: And in thy goodness thou didst meet its needs.
11. V: When the Lord sent news of victory,
R: The women who told it were a mighty host.

PSALM 68 (cont.)

12. V: Kings of armies did flee apace,
R: And she that tarried at home divided the spoil;
13. V: Wings of a dove that is covered with silver,
R: And her pinions with green gold.
14. V: When the Almighty routed the kings,
R: 'Twas like snow falling on Mount Zalmon.
15. V: The mount of God
R: Is the mount of Bashan;
V: The mount of peaks
R: Is the mount of Bashan.
16. V: Wherefore keep ye jealous watch,
R: Ye peaked mountains,
V: On the mount where God
R: Loveth to dwell?
V: Surely God
R: Shall dwell there for ever!
17. V: Myriads are the chariots of God,
R: Thousands upon thousands.
V: The Lord came
R: From Sinai in holiness.
18. V: Thou hast ascended on high,
Thou hast led captivity captive,
Thou hast taken tribute of men;
R: Yea, of rebels, too,
That the Lord might dwell there.
19. V: Blessed is the Lord day by day,
R: He beareth our burden.
20. V: God is ours,
God is our Saviour;
R: And the Lord God
Hath issues from death.
21. V: Verily, God shall crush
The head of the wicked,
R: The hair-decked pate
of him that walketh in his sins.

PSALM 68 (cont.)

22. V: The Lord said, "I will bring them back from Bashan,
R: I will bring them back from the depths of the sea,
23. V: That thy foot may be dipped in the blood of thine enemies,
R: And the tongue of thy dogs may be red through the same."
24. V: See ye the festal trains of God!
R: My God, my King, in festal procession!
25. V: First go the singers, last the minstrels,
R: In the midst, the timbrel-maidens.
26. V: In the assemblies bless ye God,
R: In the convocations of Israel.
27. V: There is Benjamin,
R: Whose folk are few,
V: Princes of Judah,
R: Rich in men,
V: Princes of Zebulon,
R: Princes of Haphtali.
28. V: Command thy strength, O God,
R: Be strong, O God, thou who hast wrought for us
29. V: From thy temple at Jerusalem
R: Where kings bring gifts to thee.
30. V: Rebuke the beasts of the marsh reeds,
R: The herd of bulls, with calves of the peoples;
31. V: Trample upon those who rejoice in spoil;
R: Scatter the peoples that delight in war.
31. V: Let envoys come from Egypt,
R: Let Kush* lift up her hand to God.
32. V: Sing unto God, ye realms of the earth,
R: Sing praises unto the Lord,
33. V: Who rideth in the ancient heavens,
R: Whose voice thundereth aloud.
34. V: Ascribe power unto God!
R: Over Israel is his majesty, his power in the clouds.

* Ethiopia.

PSALM 68 (cont.)

35. V: Terrible art thou, O God, from thy sanctuary;
R: The God of Israel giveth strength and power to his people.
V: Blessed be God.

PSALM 69

Metre: mainly 3:3; some irregularities.

1. V: Save me, O God, for there are come
R: The waters unto my soul;
2. V: I sink into deep mire,
R: And there is no standing,
V: I am come into deep waters,
R: And the flood floweth over me.
3. V: I am weary with my crying,
R: my throat is parched,
V: Mine eyes are exhausted
R: through waiting for my God.
4. V: More numerous than the hairs of my head
R: Are they that hate me without a cause,
V: More in number than my locks
R: Are they that are mine enemies without reason;
V: That which I did not extort,
R: Even that must I restore.
5. V: Thou, O God, knowest my foolishness,
R: And mine offenses are not hid from thee.
6. V: Let them that wait for thee not be put to shame through me,
R: O Lord God of Hosts,
V: Let them that seek thee not be brought to dishonour through me,
R: O God of Israel;
7. V: For , for thy sake do I bear reproach,
R: Shame doth cover my face;
8. V: I am become a stranger to my brethren,
R: And an alien to my mother's sons.
9. V: For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up,
R: And the reproaches of them that reproach thee are fallen on me.
10. V: I humbled my soul with fasting,
R: And it became a reproach to me;
11. V: I made sackcloth my clothing,
R: And I became a mockery to them;
12. V: They that sit in the gate speak against me,
R: And put me into their drinking songs!
13. V: As for me, my prayer is to thee,
R: In an acceptable time, O God,
V: In the multitude of thy mercies answer me,
R: In the surety of thy salvation.
14. V: Deliver me out of the mire that I sink not,
R: Lift me up out of the deep waters;
15. V: Let not the waterflood flow over me,
R: And let not the deep swallow me up
V: And let not the pit shut her mouth upon me.

PSALM 70

Except for very slight verbal differences this psalm is the same as Psalm 40:13-17.

1. V: Haste thee, O God, to deliver me,
R: Haste thee to help me.
2. V: Let them be put to shame and confounded together,
R: That seek after my soul;
V: Let them turn them turn themselves backward and be brought to dishonour
R: That desire my hurt;
3. V: Let them turn away in consequence of their shamefulness,
R: That say "Aha, aha!"
4. V: Let them rejoice and be glad in thee,
R: All that seek thee;
V: Let them say, "The Lord be magnified,"
R: That love thy salvation.
5. V: But I am poor and needy,
R: O God, haste thee to me;
V: My helper and my deliverer art thou,
R: My God, tarry not.

PSALM 71

A psalm written by one advanced in years, who has been the victim of much ill treatment by unscrupulous enemies. Considerable use has been made of other psalms, sometimes verbally quoted; at other times the quotation is inexact, showing it to have been quoted from memory.

Metre irregular; in all probability worked over by later scribes.

1. V: In thee, O Lord, do I trust,
R: Let me never be put to shame;
2. V: In thy righteousness deliver me and rescue me,
R: Bow down thine ear unto me;
V: Yea, save me, (3) and be unto me,
R: A Rock of safety,
V: A house of defense, to save me,
R: For my Rock art thou.
4. V: My God, rescue me
from the hand of the wicked,
R: From the clutch of the uprighteous and violent.
5. V: For thou art my hope, O Lord,
R: My trust from my youth, O Lord;
6. V: On thee have I upheld myself from the womb,
R: From the bowels of my mother
thou art my strength,
V: Of thee is my praise continually.
7. V: A wonderment to many am I,
R: But thou art my strong refuge;
8. V: My mouth is full of thy praise,
R: Of thine honour all day.
9. V: Cast me not away in the time of mine old age,
R: When my strength faileth me forsake me not;
10. V: For mine enemies speak against me,
R: They that watch for my soul conspire;
11. V: "God hath forsaken him,
Pursue him and take him,
R: For there is none that delivereth!"
12. V: O God, be not far from me,
R: My God, haste thee to help me;
13. V: Let them be ashamed that attack my soul,
R: Let them be covered with reproach and disgrace.
14. V: But as for me, I will continually rejoice,
R: And add to all thy praise;
15. V: My mouth shall tell of thy righteousness,
R: All the day of thy salvation,
V: Yea, the numbers thereof I know not.

PSALM 71 (cont.)

16. V: I will declare the mighty deeds of the Lord,
R: I will make mention of thy righteousness, thine alone.
17. V: O God, thou hast taught me from my youth,
R: And till now do I declare thy wondrous works,
18. V: Yea, even to old age and grey hairs;
R: O God, forsake me not,
V: So that I may declare thy deliverance to all the generation,
R: And thy might to a generation to come,
19. V: Thy righteousness, O God, is everlasting,
R: Thou that doest great deeds;
V: O God, who is like unto thee!
20. V: Thou didst show me many troubles,
R: But thou didst keep me alive,
V: Yea, from the depths of the earth,
R: Thou didst bring me up again,
21. V: Thou didst increase my greatness,
R: And thou didst bring back my comfort.
22. V: I also will thank thee with the harp
R: For thy faithfulness, O my God,
V: I will praise thee with the lyre,
R: O holy one of Israel;
23. V: My lips shall shout for joy,
R: For thou hast redeemed my soul.
24. V: Yea, my tongue all the day
R: Shall discourse of thy righteousness;
V: For they are ashamed and confounded
R: That seek my hurt.

PSALM 72

An enconium to a new king on his accession to the throne. According to Oesterley, the psalm was never intended for liturgical worship and never used in the worship of the Synagogue. He adds that its inclusion in the Psalter was doubtless due to the religious conception of the king's duties. (Op. cit., p. 337.)

1. V: O God, thy justice
 give to the king,
- R: And thy righteousness to the king's son,
2. V: That he may judge thy people with righteousness,
- R: And thy poor with justice.
3. V: May the mountains bring peace,
- R: And the hills righteousness;
4. V: May he vindicate the poor among the people,
- R: And help the sons of the needy,
- V: And tread down the oppressor,

5. V: While the sun endureth,
- R: And the moon, to all generations;
6. V: May it descend like rain on the land,
- R: Like showers that water the earth,
7. V: May righteousness flourish in his days,
- R: And abundance of peace till the moon be no more.
8. V: May he rule from sea to sea,
- R: And from the river to the ends of the earth;
9. V: May his foes bow down before him,
- R: And his enemies lick the dust;
10. V: May the kings of Tarshish, and the isles,
- R: Bring gifts,
- V: The kings of Sheba and Seba
- R: Offer presents;
11. V: May all kings bow down to him,
- R: All nations serve him.
12. V: For he delivereth the needy from the rich,
- R: And the oppressed that hath no helper;
13. V: He hath pity on the weak and poor,
- R: And the souls of the poor he helpeth;
14. V: He redeemeth their soul from oppression,
- R: And precious is their blood in his eyes;
15. V: May he live, and may there be given him gold of Sheba;

- V: May they pray for him continually,
- R: May they bless him at all times.

PSALM 72 (cont.)

16. V: May there be abundance of corn in the land,
R: May it grow thick on the tops of the mountains;
V: Like Lebanon may its yield flourish,
R: And its sheaves like herbs on the land.
17. V: May his name last for ever,
R: As long as the sun standeth firm,
V: And may all nations with him be prospered,
R: And all the tribes of the earth call him blessed.
18. VR: BLESSED BE THE LORD,
THE GOD OF ISRAEL,
WHO ALONE DOETH WONDROUS THINGS;
19. AND BLESSED BE HIS GLORIOUS NAME FOR EVER,
AND MAY ALL THE EARTH BE FULL OF HIS GLORY.
AMEN AND AMEN.
20. (The prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are ended.)

END OF BOOK TWO

PSALM 73

This psalm raises the old problem of good and evil. It follows a line of thought similar to that of Job. It contains one of the few OT adumbrations of a genuine doctrine of immortality.

Following Oesterley, we have transposed certain verses that seem to have become misplaced.

The following explanation of Oesterley's will serve to clarify verses 4 ff.:

"In the East, be it remembered, the first use made of newly-won wealth is to spend it on unlimited food, and it is often literally true that a man's girth varies directly as his income. So wealthy have these men become that they have passed all familiar limits (they have no "bonds"), and seem to be positively globular, with no flaw in the smooth circle of their belly." (Op. cit., p. 343.)

Metre mainly 3:3, with 2:2:2 in vv. 12 and 18, and anacrusis in vv. 2, 11, and 28. The anacruses serve to add emphasis.

1. V: Surely God is good to the upright,
R: Even to such as are pure in heart!
2. V: But as for me!
My feet had all but slipped,
R: A hair's breadth and my steps were gone.
3. V: For I grew hotly indignant at the wealth of the boasters,
R: As I gazed on the prosperity of the wicked;
4. V: For no bonds have they,
R: Faultless and fat is their belly,
5. V: They are not in the trouble of mortals,
R: They are not plagued with mankind.
10. V: Thus are they sated with bread,
R: And for water they have no thirst.
6. V: Therefore is pride their necklet,
R: Garb of violence wraps them about.
7. V: From fatness comes forth their iniquity,
R: The fair schemes of their heart pass all bounds.
8. V: They mock, and speak ill,
R: Arrogantly they speak in disdain;
9. V: They have set their mouth against heaven,
R: And their tongue roves through earth;
11. V: And they say--
"How does God know?
R: And is there knowledge in the highest?"
12. V: Behold! these are the wicked,
and in endless calm
they increase their wealth.

PSALM 73 (cont.)

13. V: Surely in vain have I kept my heart pure,
R: And washed my hands in innocence!
14. V: And I have been smitten all day,
R: And chastening was mine every morning.
15. V: Yet if I had said, "I will speak thus,"
R: I had been traitor to the generation of thy children.
16. V: So I quested to know this,
R: A trouble was it in mine eyes;
21. V: For my heart grew ever more bitter,
R: And in my reins was a gnawing pain;
22. V: And I was an ignorant brute,
R: A very beast I became before thee,
17. V: Till I entered God's holy laces,
R: Understood their latter end.
18. V: Surely in slippery places
 thou settest them,
 in beguiling thou bringest them down.
19. V: How are they a waste in a moment,
R: Through terrors are finished and ended!
20. V: As a dream when one waketh, O Lord,
R: When thou rousest thee thou wilt despise their form.
23. V: Nevertheless--I am ever with thee,
R: Thou holdest my right hand.
24. V: With thy counsel thou ledest me in the way,
R: And afterwards wilt gloriously take me.
25. V: Whom have I in the heavens?
R: In the earth I have no delight save in thee;
26. V: My flesh and my heart ceased to be,
R: But my portion is God for ever.
27. V: For lo! they perish that are far from thee,
R: All that are unfaithful to thee thou dost destroy.
28. V: But as for me!
R: The nearness of God is my good,
R: I have made in the Lord my refuge.

In the above arrangement we have for the most part followed Oesterley's translation; in a few instances, however, departing from it in favor of Smith, Coverdale, or JPSA.

PSALM 74

Two significant words appear to have fallen out of the first part of verse 20. At this point we have adopted Moffatt's conjectured translation. The rest of the psalm follows Oesterley's translation for the most part, though this has been departed from occasionally in favor of AV, Coverdale, or JPSA.

Metre generally 2:2; 3:2 in a few places.

1. V: Wherefore, O God,
hast thou cast us off for ever?
R: Thine anger burns lurid
against the flock thou didst feed;
2. V: Remember thy congregation
thou didst purchase of old -
R: Thou redeemedst the tribe of thy heritage,
Mount Zion, where thou dwellest.
3. V: Step with giant stride
to the everlasting ruins,
R: To the havoc once wrought
by the foe in thy sanctuary.
4. V: Thine adversaries have roared against thee
in the midst of thy assemblies,
R: They have raised their emblems,
emblems (5) we know not.
V: Like one lifting on high
axes in forest thickets,
6. R: They have hewn down its carvings
with axes and hammers.
7. V: They have burnt in the fire thy sanctuary,
R: They have profaned to the ground
the home of thy name;
8. V: And have said in their heart,
"Let us smite them together,
R: Let us burn all the synagogues
of God in the land."
9. V: Our emblems we see not,
there is no more any prophet,
R: Nor is there with us
one that knoweth how long.
10. V: How long, O God,
shall the adversary insult?
R: Shall the foe despise
thy name for ever?

PSALM 74 (Cont.)

11. V: Why drawest thou back
thy hand, O God?
R: And thy right hand withholdest
within thy bosom?
12. V: But thou, O God,
art my King for ever,
R: Working triumph
in the midst of the earth:
13. V: Thou didst defeat
the Sea by thy might,
R: The heads of the monsters
didst crush on the waters;
14. V: Thou didst shatter
the heads of Leviathan,
R: Gavest him as meat,
as fodder to jackals;
15. V: Thou didst rend open
fountain and torrent,
R: Thou didst dry up
perennial rivers;
16. V: Thine is the day,
yea, thine the night,
R: Thou didst ordain
the sun for a light;
17. V: Thou didst establish
all the bounds of the earth,
R: Summer and winter -
thou didst form them.
18. V: Remember this -
the foe doth insult thee,
R: And a foolish people
despiseth thy name.
19. V: Give not to the falcon
the soul of thy dove,
R: The life of thy lowly
forget not forever.
20. V: Look at these creatures,
so sleek and successful;
R: The dark places of the earth are full
of pride and violence.
21. V: Let them not turn back
crushed and ashamed.
R: Let the lowly and poor
praise thy name.

PSALM 74 (Cont.)

22. V: Arise, O God,
plead thy cause,
R: Remember thine insults
from fools all the day.
23. V: Forget not
the clamour of thine adversaries,
R: The tumult of thine enemies
that riseth continually.

PSALMS 75

1. V: We give thanks to thee,
R: O God, we give thanks!
V: And we call on thy name,
R: We recount thy deeds of wonder.
2. V: "I will choose an appointed time,
R: I will judge uprightly,
3. V: The earth melteth, and all that dwell therein,
R: I established its pillars.
4. V: I say to the boasters, 'Boast not!'
R: And to the wicked, 'Lift not your horn!
5. V: Lift not your horn on high,
R: Speak not arrogantly against the Rock.'"
6. V: For not from east nor from west,
R: Nor from the wilderness cometh uplifting.
7. V: For in the Lord's hand is a cup
R: And foaming wine filleth the wineskin.
8. V: And it hath passed from one to another,
yea, its dregs are never drained out,
all the wicked of the earth drink of it.
9. V: But I will exult for ever,
R: I will sing to the God of Jacob.
10. V: And all the horns of the wicked I will hew off,
R: And the horns of the righteous shall be exalted.

PSALM 76

1. V: In Judah is God renowned,
R: His name is great in Israel.
2. V: At Salem is his tabernacle,
R: And his dwelling in Zion.
3. V: He hath shattered all flashing arrows,
R: The shield and sword and war weapons.
4. V: More terrible art thou, O mighty one,
R: Than ravening lion.
5. V: Devastated are the stout-hearted,
R: Stilled in their sleep.
V: Nor have the mighty men
R: Found their power.
6. V: At thy rebuke, O God of Jacob,
R: Sank in slumber the riders on horseback
7. V: Thou, even thou, art errrible;
R: Who can stand the full weight of thy wrath?
8. V: From heaven thou utterest judgment;
R: Earth feareth and is still,
9. V: When thou risest for judgment, O God,
R: To save all the lowly of the earth.
10. V: For the wrath of man doth praise thee,
R: The remnant of wrath hold festival to thee.
11. V: Make vows and fulfil them
R: To the Lord your God,
V: Let all about him bring
R: A gift to the terrible one.
12. V: Thou cuttest off the spirit of princes,
R: Thou art terrible to the kings of the earth.

PSALM 77

Vv. 16 ff. have a different tone and style from those preceding. The probability is that they were originally from another poem.

Following Moffatt I have placed v. 20 immediately after v. 15, where it logically belongs.

1. V: My voice was Godward! and I cried,
R: My voice was Godward! and he gave ear.
2. V: In the day of distress I sought the Lord,
R: My hand was outstretched and never grew numb,
V: My soul refused to be comforted.
3. V: I moan as I remember God,
R: I muse upon him till I faint,
4. V: Thou holdest the lids of mine eyes,
R: I am so troubled that I cannot speak;
5. V: I have considered the days of old,
R: Years long past (6) I recall;
V: I commune by night with my heart,
R: And my spirit maketh diligent search:
7. V: "Will the Lord for ever discard us,
R: Will he never be kind again?
8. V: Is his love ended for ever?
R: Finished to all generations?
9. V: Hath God forgotten to show favour?
R: Or shut up his compassion in wrath?"
10. V: Then I said: "This is my disaster -
R: That the right hand of the Most High doth change."
11. V: I will recall thy deeds, O Lord,
R: For glorious of old was thy wonder-work;
12. V: And I will consider all thy working,
R: And on thy deeds will I meditate.
13. V: O God, thy way is in holiness;
R: What deity is as great as God?

PSALM 77 (Cont.)

14. V: Thou art the God that doeth wonders,
R: Thou hast showed among peoples thy strength;
15. V: Thou didst redeem with thine arm thy people,
R: The sons of Jacob and Joseph;
20. V: Thou didst lead thy people as a flock,
R: By the hand of Moses and Aaron.
16. V: The waters saw thee, O God,
the waters saw thee and were troubled,
yea, even the deeps kept shaking.
17. R: The clouds streamed with water,
heaven's vault uttered its voice,
thine arrows flashed hither and thither.
18. V: The voice of thy thunder was in the heaven,
thy lightnings illumined the world,
the earth trembled and quaked.
19. R: Thy way is in the sea, O God,
and thy path in great waters,
but thy footprints may not be discerned.
-

Translations used: Oesterley, AV, Coverdale, JPSA, Smith, Moffatt.

PSALM 78.

1. V: Give ear, my people, to my instruction,
R: Bend your ear to my words.
2. V: I would open my mouth in wise saying,
R: Pour out riddles from the past.
3. V: What we have heard and known,
R: And our fathers recounted to us,
4. V: We will not hide from our sons,
R: Telling to an after age,
V: The praises of the Lord and his might,
R: And the marvelous deeds he wrought.
5. V: How he raised up a testimony in Jacob,
R: And set the Law in Israel;
V: How he gave commands to our fathers,
R: To teach them to their sons;
6. V: That another generation might know,
R: Sons that should be born;
V: That they might rise and recount to their sons,
7. R: So that they might put their trust in God;
V: And not forget the feats of God,
R: But keep his commands,
8. V: And not become as their fathers,
R: A generation perverse and defiant;
V: A generation that set not its heart,
R: Whose spirit was not faithful with God.
9. V: The sons of Ephraim were a false bow
R: That turned in the day of battle.
10. V: They kept not the covenant of God,
R: And refused to walk in his Law.
11. V: And forgot the feats of the Lord,
R: And his marvels which he had showed them.
12. V: Before their fathers he wrought marvels,
R: In the land of Egypt, the field of Zoan.
13. V: He clave the sea and brought them through,
R: And made the waters stand up as a heap.
14. V: And he led them in cloud by day,
R: And all night in the radiance of fire.
15. V: He clave rocks in the wilderness,
R: And gave them drink in abundance as from oceans.
16. V: And he brought out streams from the crag,
R: And water down as rivers.
17. V: But they still sinned against him yet more,
R: Revolting against the Most High in the desert.
18. V: And they tempted God in their heart,
R: Asking food for which they longed.

PSALM 78 (cont.)

19. V: They questioned God: Was he able
R: To spread a table in the wilderness?
20. V: He did, indeed, smite the rock, so that the water flowed,
R: And streams poured forth,
V: But can he also give bread,
R: Or provide flesh for his people?
21. V: Therefore--
The Lord heard in fell rage,
and fire blazed out against Jacob,
yea, hot anger went up against Israel.
22. V: For they did not believe in God,
R: Nor trust his saving power;
23. V: So he commanded the skies above,
R: And the doors of heaven he opened;
24. V: And he rained upon them manna,
R: And gave heaven's bread to them;
25. V: Food of angels did man eat,
R: He sent their fill of victuals;
26. V: He loosed the east wind from heaven,
R: And brought the south in its strength;
27. V: And he rained down flesh as dust,
R: And flying fowl as the sand of the seas;
28. V: And they fell in the midst of their camp,
R: Round about their dwellings;
29. V: And they ate and were utterly sated,
R: He gave them that which they craved.
30. V: They were not yet estranged from their lust,
R: Their meat was still in their mouths,
31. V: When the anger of God rose high against them,
and he slew among their stout ones,
and brought low Israel's youth.
32. V: For all this they sinned yet more,
R: And believed not his wonder works;
33. V: So he ended their days in vanity,
R: And all their years in dismay.
34. V: When he smote them, then they sought him,
R: And again they inquired of God;
35. V: And they remembered that God was their rock,
R: And that the Most High God was their champion.
36. V: So they beguiled him with their mouth,
R: And lied to him with their tongue;
37. V: But their heart was not steadfast with him,
R: Nor were they loyal to his covenant.

PSALM 78 (cont.)

38. V: But he was so merciful, that he forgave their misdeeds,
 R: And destroyed them not;
 V: Yea, many a time turned he his anger away,
 R: And stirred not up all his fury,
39. V: And remembered they were but flesh,
 R: A passing breath that cometh not back.
40. V: How oft they defie him in the wilderness,
 R: Grieved him in the desert!
41. V: They tried God again and again,
 R: And vexed the Holy One of Israel.
42. V: They remembered not his hand,
 R: The day he redeemed them from the adversary,
43. V: When he appointed his signs in Egypt,
 R: And his marvels in the field of Zoan;
44. V: And he turned their rivers into blood,
 R: So that they could not drink of their streams;
45. V: He sent against them
 the locust and it devoured them,
 and the frog and it destroyed them.
46. V: And he gave their produce to grasshoppers,
 R: And their toil to the locust;
47. V: He killed their vines with hail,
 R: And their sycamores with hailstones;
48. V: And delivered their beasts to hail,
 R: And their cattle to lightnings;
49. V: He loosed on them the heat of his anger,
 R: Wrath and fury and trouble;
 V: He sent evil angels among them,
50. R: He made a smooth road for his anger.
 V: He kept not their soul from death,
 R: And their life he delivered to pestilence;
51. V: And he smote all the first-born of Egypt,
 R: First-fruits of vigour in the land of Ham.
52. V: And he moved his people as sheep,
 R: And guided them as a flock in the wilderness;
53. V: And led them secure and unafraid,
 R: And whelmed their foes in the sea;
54. V: And brought them to his holy precinct,
 R: The mount his right hand had won.
55. V: He drove out the nations also before them,
 and divided them an inheritance by line,
 and made the tribes of Israel dwell in
 their tents.

PSALM 78 (cont.)

56. V: Yet they tempted and defied God,
R: The Most High, and his testimonies they observed not.
57. V: And went back and were treacherous as their fathers,
R: They turned as a deceitful bow.
58. V: And they angered him with their high-places,
R: And with their idols roused his jealousy.
59. V: God heard in fell rage,
R: And utterly spurned Israel.
60. V: And tore down the habitations of Shiloh,
R: The tent where he dwelt among men.
61. V: He let his great ark be captured,
R: Let his splendid ark fall to the foe.
62. V: He delivered his people to the sword;
R: And against his inheritance raged in fury.
63. V: Fire devoured his youths,
R: And his virgins none did praise,
64. V: His priests fell by the sword,
R: And for his widows none did weep.
65. V: Then the Lord awoke as a sleeper,
R: As a warrior shouting through wine;
66. V: And he smote his adversaries backwards,
R: Agelong shame he put upon them.
67. V: The, disowning the tents of Joseph,
R: And passing by Ephraim's tribe,
68. V: He chose the tribe of Judah,
R: His beloved mountain of Zion;
69. V: Where he built his shrine like heaven on high,
R: Firm as the earth he has founded for ever.
70. V: He chose David his servant,
R: And took him from the sheepfolds;
71. V: He brought him from following ewe-mothers,
R: To pasture Jacob his people;
72. V: And he fed them in faithfulness of heart,
R: And with the skill of his hands he led them.

PSALM 79

1. V: O God!
Gentiles have come into thine inheritance,
thy holy temple have they defiled,
they have laid Jerusalem in ruins.
2. R: They have given the carcasses of thy servants
as food to the birds of the heavens,
the flesh of thy saints to the beasts of the field
3. V: They have poured out their blood like water
R: Round about Jerusalem, with none to bury them.
4. V: We have become a mockery to our neighbours,
R: A scorn and derision to those round about us.
5. V: How long!
O Lord, wilt thou be wroth for ever?
R: Will thy jealousy burn as fire?
6. V: Pour out thy wrath on the Gentiles,
R: That have not known thee,
V: And on kingdoms
R: That have not called on thy name.
7. V: For they have devoured Jacob,
R: And wasted his dwelling.
8. V: O remember not against us
R: The iniquities of the past,
V: Let thy pitying love swiftly meet us,
R: For we languish sorely.
9. V: Help us, O God of our salvation,
R: For thy glorious name's sake.
10. V: Why should the Gentiles say,
R: "Where is their God?"
V: May we see thy vengeance on the Gentiles
R: For shedding the blood of thy servants.
11. V: Let there come before thee
R: The prisoner's plaint,
V: And by thy mighty power
R: Preserve those doomed to die;
12. V: And requite to our neighbours,
sevenfold into their bosom,
R: The reproach wherewith they reproached thee, O Lord.
13. V: Then we, thy people,
R: The sheep of thy pasture,
V: Will praise thee for ever,
R: To all ages tell thy praise.

PSALM 80

This psalm has a strophic arrangement; note the repeated refrain. However, as the poem now stands it is not completely symmetrical; the same number of lines does not occur before each refrain. Probably a line has dropped out in course of transmission. A few additional words have also dropped out. (I have added the refrain at the end of verses 10 and 16)

1. V: O Shepherd of Israel, give ear,
R: That leddest Joseph as a flock.
V: Thou that sittest on the Cherubim, shine forth
2. R: Before Ephraim and Benjamin.
V: And from slumber arouse thy valour,
R: And come for our salvation.
3. V: O GOD OF HOSTS, RESTORE US,
R: AND LIGHTEN THY FACE THAT WE MAY BE SAVED.

4. V: O God of Hosts, how long!
R: Thou hast fumed at the prayer of thy people,
5. V: Thou hast fed us with bread of tears,
R: And hast made us drink tears by large measure.
6. V: Thou dost make us the butt of our neighbours,
R: While our foes mock at us.
7. V: O GOD OF HOSTS, RESTORE US,
R: AND LIGHTEN THY FACE THAT WE MAY BE SAVED.

8. V: Thou movedst a vine from Egypt,
R: Drivest out nations and plantedst it.
9. V: Thou didst clear and place for it;
R: It took root and spread over the land.
10. V: Its shadow covered the mountains,
R: And its branches the cedars of God.
V: O GOD OF HOSTS, RESTORE US,
R: AND LIGHTEN THY FACE THAT WE MAY BE SAVED.

11. V: It sent forth its boughs to the Sea,
R: And unto the River its tendrils.
12. V: Why brakest thou down its fences?
R: That all passing the road may pluck it.
13. V: The boar from the forest may trample it,
R: And wild creatures feed upon it.
14. V: O GOD OF HOSTS, RESTORE US,
R: AND LIGHTEN THY FACE THAT WE MAY BE SAVED.

PSALM 80 (cont.)

- V: Look forth from the heavens and behold,
R: And watch over this vine,
15. V: And the garden thy right hand planted,
R: The branch thou madest strong for thyself.
16. V: Men have burned it, cut it down;
R: May they perish at the rebuke of thy countenance.
V: O GOD OF HOSTS, RESTORE US,
R: AND LIGHTEN THY FACE THAT WE MAY BE SAVED.
17. V: Be thy hand on the man of thy right hand,
R: On the man thou madest strong for thyself;
18. V: And we will not turn back from thee,
R: If thou revive us we will call on thy name.
19. V: O GOD OF HOSTS, RESTORE US,
R: AND LIGHTEN THY FACE THAT WE MAY BE SAVED.

PSALM 81

This psalm presents certain puzzling features. It seems to be a telescoping of parts of two psalms.

The first part is an exultant hymn evidently designed to be sung at some high festival; whether Tabernacles, Passover, or Weeks is not clear. In explanation of the setting Oesterley quotes Kittel's notes on the opening verses, viz.:

"The community is gathered in the forecourt, priests make ready the offering, in the halls about the Temple and at tables in the court preparations for the festal meal are made by the separate clans and groups of celebrants. Through the doors of the great court streams a surging festal throng; ever-fresh hosts of pilgrims and participants approach the altar on which the sacred ritual must be consummated. Into this scene we are transported by the rousing note of our psalm, which itself was intended to contribute to the glory of the great festival. At once it supplies us with an illuminating picture of the lyric element in such festivals; the court re-echoes with the joy and exultation of the festal crowd (cf. Lam. 2:7). At intervals hymns ring out, sung by priestly choirs, often, as we know, by appointed individuals, accompanied by Zither, lute, and harp. Elsewhere cymbals control the rhythm of worshippers moving in stately procession or pacing round the altar, and when the sacrifice is burned, the priests make their ram's horns heard in solemn, hollow tones, to tell even distant worshippers that the sacred rite has been consummated."*

But--between verses 10 and 11 the tone suddenly changes. The tone of exultation changes to a condemnation of Israel for national apostasy, and ends with a reference to the blessings the nation might have enjoyed had it been faithful. Nor does verse 16 read like a natural conclusion.

Verse 10c is particularly puzzling. In the present text it seems to stand alone. If it was indeed a part of the psalm contained in the preceding verses, then some significant lines must have fallen out between 10b and 10c. On the other hand, it does not form a logical introduction to verses 11-16.

The psalm opens with a priest standing forth and leading the call to joyful worship. Then the word passes to a prophet, who speaks in the name of Yahweh. (Note the change in metre in verses 5c-7.) Then comes a demand to the people to follow Yahweh, made in the language and spirit of Deuteronomy. (Between the words of the prophet and this demand, Oesterley thinks some words may have been accidentally omitted.) At this point (10c), as we have already noted, the whole tone and purport of the poem change. A totally different atmosphere is introduced. We have here a lament over Israel's refusal to be faithful and thus receive Yahweh's gifts--hardly consistent with the festal note of the preceding verses. This lament suddenly breaks off--surely not a natural conclusion.

* Op. cit., p. 370

PSALM 81

1. V: Break out in praise to God our fortress!
R: Shout aloud to the God of Jacob!
2. V: Lift up harp song and play the timbrel,
R: Sound the sweet lyre and lute.
3. V: Ring the new moon blast on the horn,
R: At the full moon on our festal day.
4. V: For an ordinance in Israel is it,
R: A decree of the God of Jacob.
5. V: A testimony he appointed in Joseph,
R: When he came from the land of Egypt.
- V: The voice of one I know not do I hear--
6. "I have removed the burden from thy shoulder,
thy hands are freed from the basket.
7. In affliction thou calledst and I delivered thee,
I answered thee in the secret home of the thunder,
I assayed thee at the waters of Meribah.
8. V: Hear, my people, and let me testify to thee,
R: O Israel, if thou wilt hearken to me!
9. V: There shall be no strange god in thee,
R: Nor shall thou bow to a foreign god.
10. V: I am the Lord, thy God,
R: That brought thee up from the land of Egypt."
- V: Open wide thy mouth that I may fill it.
11. V: But my people obeyed not my voice,
R: And Israel showed me no good will.
12. V: So I let them go in the stubbornness of their heart,
R: That they might walk in their own counsels.
13. V: Would my people were hearkening to me,
R: Israel were walking in my ways!
14. V: Soon would I subdue their foes,
R: And turn my hand against their enemies.
15. V: They that hate them would come cringing to them,
R: And their terror would be for ever.
16. V: But I would feed them with the finest wheat,
R: With honey from the rock to their heart's content.

PSALM 82

In this psalm Yahweh sits in judgment on lesser deities. Verses 5 and 8 do not belong; they are later interpolations and mar the symmetry of the poem. Except for these two verses the psalm has a very regular rhythm. In arranging this psalm for responsive reading I have, accordingly, omitted them. (For text of these omitted verses see footnote.)

1. V: God standeth forth in the divine council,
R: In the midst of the gods giveth judgment;
2. V: "How long will ye judge unjustly,
R: And lift up the face of the wicked?
3. V: Defend the poor and the fatherless,
R: Do right by the humble and needy;
4. V: Rescue the lowly and the poor,
R: From the power of the wicked deliver them;
6. V: Or, I say, though ye are gods,
R: All of you sons of the highest,
7. V: Yet surely like men shall ye die,
R: And as one of the princes shall fall."

Verse 5: They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course.

Verse 8: Arise, O God, judge the earth: for thou shalt inherit all nations.

PSALM 83

1. V: O God, let no rest be thine,
R: Be not silent nor still, O God.
2. V: For behold, thy foes roar in tumult,
R: And they that hate thee lift up their head.
3. V: Against thy people they take crafty counsel,
R: And plot against thy treasured ones.
4. V: They say:
"Come, and let us destroy them that they be no people,
R: Let Israel's name be remembered no more."
5. V: For they have planned in their heart together.
R: Against thee have they made a covenant.
6. V: Tents of Edom and Ishmaelites,
R: Moab and Hagarites,
7. V: Gebal and Ammon and Amalek,
R: Philistia, with the dwellers in Tyre;
8. V: Yea, Assyria is confederate with them,
R: And hath become an arm to Lot's sons. Selah.
9. V: Deal with them as with Sisera,
R: As with Jabin at Kishon's torrent;
10. V: Which were destroyed at Endor,
R: Dung they became for the ground.
11. V: As Midian make their princes,
R: As Oreb and Zeeb their chieftains;
12. V: Who said, "Let us take for ourselves
R: The holy homestead of God."
13. V: O my God, make them as thistledown,
R: As chaff before the wind.
14. V: As when fire kindleth in the forest,
R: As when flame blazeth on the hills,
15. V: So pursue them with thy stormwind,
R: And with thy hurricane confound them.
16. V: Fill their faces with contempt,
R: And let them seek thy name, O Lord.
17. V: Let them be ashamed and confounded for ever,
R: Yea, let them be dismayed and perish!
18. V: And let them know that thou alone
R: Art Most High over all the earth.

PSALM 84

The produce of the land is gathered in; the great autumn festival is at hand. From every village in the country comes a train of pilgrims, and as they draw near to their journey's end they sing this song.

The psalm has regular strophic arrangement, each of its three stanzas having six lines, twelve half-lines. In the text as it has come down to us, at the end of each of the first two stanzas is "Selah"; at the end of the last, the refrain: "O Lord of Hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee." The first stanza deals with the happiness of those who make their permanent home in the sanctuary; in the second the pilgrims contemplate the journey now nearly completed; in the last they pray for divine help and protection.

In the arrangement below, we have inserted the refrain at the end of each stanza.

1. V: How lovely are thy dwellings,
R: O Lord of Hosts'.
2. V: My soul longeth, yea, fainteth
R: For the courts of the Lord.
V: My heart and my flesh cry aloud
R: To greet the living God.
3. V: Yea, the sparrow hath found a house,
R: And the swallow her nest.
V: Where she hath laid her brood--thine altars,
R: O Lord of Hosts.
4. V: Blessed are the dwellers in thy house;
R: They praise thee for ever.
VR: O LORD OF HOSTS,
BLESSED IS THE MAN THAT TRUSTETH IN THEE.

5. V: Blessed are men whose strength is in thee,
R: Who love pilgrimage.
6. V: They pass through the Vale of Balsams,
R: A fountain they make it.
V: With pools of blessing
R: The early rain covereth it.
7. V: They go from strength to strength,
R: They shall see God in Zion.
8. V: O Lord, God of Hosts,
R: Hear my prayer!
V: Give ear, O God of Jacob,
R: My King and my God.
VR: O LORD OF HOSTS,
BLESSED IS THE MAN THAT TRUSTETH IN THEE.

PSALM 84 (cont.)

9. V: Behold, O God our Shield,
R: And look upon the face of thine anointed.
10. V: For a day in thy courts is better
R: Than a thousand elsewhere;
V: To haunt the threshold of God's house
R: Than a home in wicked tents.
11. V: For a sun and a shield
R: Is the Lord, our God;
V: Grace and glory
R: Doth the Lord give;
V: He withholdeth no good
R: From them that walk in integrity.
12. VR: O LORD OF HOSTS,
BLESSED IS THE MAN THAT TRUSTETH IN THEE.

PSALM 85

Eschatological. The perfect tenses used are the "prophetic perfect," used by the prophet to refer to events that are so imminent that in imagination of the speaker they are already accomplished. In his imagination the prophet transports himself into the future and so describes the events as already seen or heard by him.

Three clearly marked divisions: vv. 1-3; 4-7; 8-13.

1. V: Thou hast shown favour, O Lord, to thy land,
R: Thou hast brought back the restoration of Jacob;
2. V: Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people,
R: Thou hast covered all their sins;
3. V: Thou hast withdrawn all thy wrath,
R: Thou hast ceased from the fierceness of thine anger.

4. V: Turn now, O God of our salvation,
R: And take away thine indignation from us.
5. V: Wilt thou be angry with us for ever?
R: Wilt thou prolong thy wrath to all ages?
6. V: Wilt thou not revive us again,
R: That thy people may rejoice in thee?
7. V: Show us, O Lord, thy love,
R: And thy salvation grant unto us.

8. V: I would hearken to what the Lord will say;
R: Will not the Lord speak peace
V: To his people and unto his loved ones,
R: And to them that turn to him in confidence?
9. V: Of a truth, nigh to them that fear him is his salvation,
R: That his glory may abide in our land.
10. V: Love and Truth are met together,
R: Righteousness and Peace kiss each other;
11. V: Truth sprouteth forth from the earth,
R: And Righteousness looketh down from heaven.
12. V: Yea, the Lord giveth that which is good,
R: And our land yieldeth her increase.
13. V: Righteousness goeth before him,
R: And Uprightness on the way of his steps.

PSALM 85

(Alternative arrangement)

"As sung in the Temple worship, it is probable that the first section was sung by one voice, section two by the whole congregation, while a different voice sang the last section." (Oesterley, op. cit., p. 382.) This is the basis of the following arrangement:

1. V: Thou hast shown favour, O Lord, to thy land,
thou hast brought back the restoration of Jacob;
2. Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people,
thou hast covered all their sins;
3. Thou hast withdrawn all thy wrath,
thou hast ceased from the fierceness of thine anger.

4. R: Turn now, O God of our salvation,
and take away thine indignation from us.
5. Wilt thou be angry with us for ever?
wilt thou prolong thy wrath to all ages?
6. Wilt thou not revive us again,
that thy people may rejoice in thee?
7. Show us, O Lord, thy love,
and thy salvation grant unto us.

8. V: I would hearken to what the Lord will say,
will not the Lord speak peace
To his people and unto his loved ones,
and to them that turn to him in confidence?
9. Of a truth, nigh to them that fear him is his salvation,
that his glory may abide in our land.
10. Love and Truth are met together,
Righteousness and Peace kiss each other;
11. Truth sprouteth forth from the earth,
and Righteousness looketh down from heaven.
12. Yea, the Lord giveth that which is good,
and our land yieldeth her increase.
13. Righteousness goeth before him,
and Uprightness on the way of his steps.

PSALM 86

1. V: Incline, O Lord, thine ear and answer me,
R: For lowly and poor am I!
2. V: Guard my life,
R: For godly am I;
V: Save thy servant, O my God,
R: Which trusteth in thee.
3. V: Show me thy favour, O Lord,
R: For to thee do I cry all the day;
4. V: Gladden the soul of thy servant,
R: For to thee do I lift up my soul.
5. V: For thou, O Lord,
R: Art good and forgiving,
V: And plenteous in love
R: To all that call upon thee.

6. V: Give ear, O Lord, to my prayer,
R: And attend to my suppliant voice.
7. V: In the day of my adversity
R: I will call thee, for thou wilt answer me.
8. V: None is like thee among gods, O Lord,
R: Nor are any deeds like thine,
9. V: Let all the nations
R: Whom thou hast made, come;
V: And let them bow before thee, O Lord,
R: And let them honour thy name.
10. V: For great art thou,
R: And a doer of marvels;
V: Thou, O God,
R: Alone art great.
11. V: Teach me, O Lord, thy way;
R: I will walk in thy truth.
V: May my heart rejoice
R: To fear thy name!

12. V: Let me praise thee, O Lord, my God,
R: With all my heart,
V: And let me honour thy name for ever,
13. R: For great is thy love;
V: And thou shalt deliver my life
R: From nethermost Sheol.
14. V: O God, the arrogant
R: Have risen against me,
V: And the council of the tyrants
R: Seek my life.

PSALM 86 (cont.)

15. V: Thou, O Lord, art a God
R: Compassionate and gracious,
V: Slow to anger,
R: And great in love and truth.
16. V: Turn unto me, and show me favour,*
Give thy strength to thy servant,
R: And deliver thy handmaid's son.
17. V: Show unto me
R: A token for good,
V: And let them that hate me fear and be ashamed,
R: For thou, O Lord, hast helped and consoled me.

* This half-line does not have a parallel. Possibly some words have dropped out.

PSALM 87

A beautiful little psalm striking a high, enthusiastic note of universal brotherhood. Zion is pictured as the spiritual mother of all men. But--as Oesterley observes:

"The grandeur of this short psalm is somewhat obscured by dislocations in the text. These dislocations are due to the lines having been copied out in their wrong order. This may be hypothetically explained in this way: a scribe, in copying out the psalm, inadvertently omitted some of the lines, which he subsequently added in the margin; a later scribe, in making his copy of the psalm, naturally wished to include the lines which had been placed in the margin; but this was no easy matter, because there was, presumably, no indication as to where they belonged in the text. The later scribe had, therefore, to do the best he could; but he was somewhat wanting in discernment, otherwise he would not, for example, have begun the psalm with a meaningless sentence, as it is in its present form; nor would he have been content with the illogical sequence of the lines as we now have them; nor does he seem to have realized the great significance of the refrain: "This one was born there." *

The arrangement below is admittedly conjectural, but it does read logically and at least brings out the great underlying theme of the poem. I have added the refrain: "This one was born there," in a couple of places, not only because the thought and metre seemed to demand it, but because it gives an enthusiastic, exultant ring to the poem.

2. V: The Lord loveth the gates of Zion
R: Above all the dwelling-places of Jacob;
1. V: Her foundation is upon the holy hills,
- 5c. R: He hath founded it for ever.
3. V: Glorious things are told of thee,
R: O city of God: Selah.
6. V: The Lord writeth down in the peoples' register:
R: "THIS ONE WAS BORN THERE";
4. V: I record Rahab# and Babylon as those that know me;
R: "THIS ONE WAS BORN THERE";
V: Behold, Philistia and Tyre, with Ethiopia,
R: "THIS ONE WAS BORN THERE";
- 5ab. V: Yea, to Zion it shall be said,
R: Each one was born in her;
V: Singers and dancers all respond:
R: "THIS ONE WAS BORN THERE."

* Op. cit., p. 390.

Emblematical name for Egypt.

PSALM 88

1. V: O Lord!
My God! I have cried by day,
R: Cried out in the night before thee.
2. V: May my prayer come before thee!
R: Incline thine ear to my ringing note.
3. V: For my soul is sated with sorrows,
R: And my life draweth near to Sheol.
4. V: I am numbered with them that go down to the Pit,
R: I am become as a man strengthless;
5. V: Left to myself amont the dead,
R: Like the slain that lie in the grave;
V: Whom thou hast remembered no more,
R: Seeing that they have been cut off from thy hand.
6. V: Thou settest me in the nethermost Pit,
R: Among them that are restrained in the depths.
7. V: Upon me resteth thy wrath;
R: All thy breakers thou hast brought over me. Selah.
8. V: Thou hast put mine acquaintances far from me,
R: Thou hast made me loathsome to them.
V: I am shut up, I cannot go forth,
9. R: Mine eye languisheth from affliction.
V: I called upon thee, O Lord, every day,
R: I spread out my palms unto thee.
10. V: Wilt thou work a wonder for the dead?
R: Or shall shades arise to praise thee? Selah.
11. V: Shall thy love be told in the tomb?
R: Or thy fidelity in Abaddon?
12. V: Shall thy wonders be known in the darkness?
R: Thy triumph in the land of oblivion?
13. V: And I!
Unto thee, O Lord, have I cried,
R: And in the morning my prayer was wont to greet thee.
14. V: Wherefore?
O Lord, dost thou cast off my soul?
R: Hidest thy face from me?
15. V: Afflicted am I, and am weary from my youth,
R: I suffer thy terrors, I grow faint.
16. V: Thy fury hath passed over me,
R: Thy terrors have made an end of me.
17. V: They are about me as water all the day,
R: They have made their circuit against me altogether.
18. V: Lover hast thou taken far from me,
R: And comrade and acquaintance thou hast withdrawn.

PSALM 89

Though opinions on the subject differ, there is some justification for the belief that this psalm is a combination of three originally independent psalms. This is suggested by the entirely different subject-matter of the three component parts, as well as by certain other internal evidences.

Verses 1 and 2 are introductory, setting forth the theme of the psalmist's praise: the loving acts of Yahweh.

The component parts, after the introductory verses, are: (a) vv. 5-16; (b) vv. 3, 4, 19-37; (c) vv. 38-51; the last verse, 52, is a benediction marking the close of Book III.

The first of the three psalms here combined is a Hymn of Praise glorifying the supremacy of Yahweh among the heavenly hosts. The second commemorates Yahweh's covenant with the house of David. The third is a pathetic plaint over the downfall of the monarchy. The three themes are thus of a very different nature.

It would seem that verses 3 and 4 have become misplaced, that they properly belong at the beginning of the second psalm, after verse 18. In so placing them in this arrangement we are following the example of both Moffatt and Oesterley.

1. V: Of thy loving acts, O Lord, will I ceaselessly sing,
R: Will ever make known thy faithfulness with my mouth;
2. V: For I said, "For ever is thy love built up,
R: Like the heavens is thy faithfulness established for ever."

(a)

5. V: The heavens give praise for thy wondrous acts, O Lord,
R: Yea, for thy faithfulness, the assembly of holy ones;
6. V: For who in the skies can compare with the Lord,
R: Is like the Lord among the sons of Gods?
7. V: God, who is fearful in the assembly of the holy ones,
R: Mighty is he and awful among all around him!
8. V: O Lord!
God of hosts, who is like thee?
R: Thy might and thy terror are round about thee.
9. V: Thou rulest the raging of the sea,
R: The roaring of its waters thou stillest;
10. V: Thou didst crush Rahab* as one pierced,
R: With thy mighty arm thou didst scatter thy foes.

* "Rahab" is an emblematical name for "Egypt."

PSALM 89 (cont.)

11. V: Thine are the heavens, and thine is the earth;
R: The world and its fulness,--thou didst found them;
12. V: North and south thou didst create them;
R: Tabor and Hermon shout for joy in thy name.
13. V: Thine is the arm, and thine is the might,
R: Strong is thy hand, lifted up thy right hand.
14. V: Righteousness and justice are the stay of thy throne,
R: Love and truth enter in before thee.
15. V: Blessed are the people who know the shout,
R: In the light of thy countenance they walk, O Lord.
16. V: In thy name they rejoice all the day,
R: In thy righteousness they shout for joy;
17. V: For the glory of their strength art thou,
R: In thy favour our horn is exalted;
18. V: For to the Lord belongeth our shield,
R: To the Holy One of Israel our King.

(b)

3. V: Thou didst make a covenant with thy chosen,
R: Didst swear to David thy servant;
4. V: "For ever will I establish thy seed,
R: And build up thy house eternally." Selah.
19. V: At that time thou spakest in vision
R: Unto thy sanctified one, and saidst:
V: "I have set the crown on a mighty one,
R: Have exalted one chosen from among the people;
20. V: I found my servant David,
R: With my holy oil I anointed him,
21. V: One whom mine hand upholdeth,
R: And him mine arm doth strengthen;
22. V: No enemy shall conquer him,
R: No son of wickedness oppress him;
23. V: I will crush his foes out of his sight,
R: Them that hate him will I strike down;
24. V: My faithfulness and love are with him,
R: In my name shall his horn be exalted;
25. V: I will set his hand on the sea,
R: And on the rivers his right hand.
26. V: He shall call unto me, 'My Father art thou,
R: My God, and the Rock of my help';
27. V: Yea, I have made him my first-born,
R: Most high among kings of the earth.

PSALM 89 (cont.)

28. V: For ever I will keep for him my love,
R: And my covenant shall stand fast with him;
29. V: I will establish his seed for ever,
R: And his throne as the days of heaven.
30. V: If his sons forsake my law,
R: And walk not in mine ordinances,
31. V: If they profane my statutes,
R: And keep not my commandments,
32. V: I will punish their sin with a rod,
R: And with scourges their iniquity.
33. V: Yet my love will I not deny him,
R: Nor suffer my faithfulness to fail;
34. V: I will not annul my covenant,
R: Nor change the issue from my lips.
35. V: One thing have I sworn by my holiness,
R: --and I will not deceive David--;
36. V: His seed shall endure for ever,
R: And his throne as the sun before me;
37. V: Like the moon shall it stand for ever,
R: And as long as the sky standeth firm." Selah.

(c)

38. V: But thou hast spurned and rejected,
R: Hast been wroth with thine anointed;
39. V: Hast annulled the covenant with thy servant,
R: Hast polluted his crown to the earth;
40. V: Hast broken down all his walls,
R: Hast made his defences a ruin;
41. V: All that pass by have plundered him,
R: He is become the scorn of his neighbours;
42. V: Thou hast exalted the right hand of his foes,
R: Hast gladdened all his enemies;
43. V: Thou hast turned his sword from the adversary
R: Hast not granted him victory in battle;
44. V: Thou hast broken the sceptre from his hand,
R: And his throne to the ground hast thou cast;
45. V: Thou hast shortened the days of his youth,
R: Hast covered him with grey hair. Selah.
46. V: How long, O Lord? wilt thou hide thyself for ever?
R: Shall thy wrath burn on like a fire?
47. V: Remember how I come to an end for ever,
R: Hast thou created for nought all the sons of men?
48. V: What man doth live who shall not see death?
R: Shall his soul escape from the hand of Sheol? Selah.

PSALM 89 (cont.)

49. V: Where are thine acts of love, the former ones, Lord,
R: Which thou swarest to David in thy faithfulness?
50. V: Remember, O Lord, the reproach of thy servant,
R: Which I bear in my bosom--the contempt of the peoples--
51. V: Wherewith thine enemies reproach, O Lord,
R: Wherewith they reproach the footsteps of thine anointed.
52. V: BLESSED BE THE LORD FOR EVER,
R: AMEN AND AMEN.

PSALM 90

1. VR: O Lord!
A dwelling hast thou been
for us in all generations.
2. Ere the mountains were born,
ere the earth had traueiled, and the world,
from everlasting to everlasting thou art God.
3. V: Thou bringest man back to destruction,
R: And sayest, "Return, sons of men."
4. V: For a thousand years in thy sight
R: Are as a passing yesterday, and a watch.
V: In the night (5) thou checkest their sleep,
R: In the morning they become as grass.
6. V: At morn it doth blossom and burgeon,
R: At eve doth it droop and wither.
7. V: So perish we in thine anger,
R: And in thy wrath are we confounded.
8. V: Thou hast set our iniquities before thee,
R: Our secret sins in the light of thy face.
9. V: For all our days have declined in thy fury,
R: Our years are ended as a sigh.
10. V: The days of our years are seventy years,
R: Or through strength eighty years;
V: Yet their pride is pain and sorrow,
R: For it is cutt off swiftly, and we have flown.
11. V: Who knoweth the power of thine anger?
R: And who feareth the stroke of thy fury?
12. V: To number our days so teach us,
R: That we may let wisdom enter our heart.
13. V: Back, O Lord! How long!
R: And repent concerning thy servants.
14. V: Satisfy us at morn with thy love,
R: That we may exult and be glad all our days.
15. V: Gladden us in proportion to the days thou afflictedst us,
R: The years when we saw evil.
16. V: Let thy working appear to thy servants,
R: And thy splendour upon their sons;
17. V: And let the loveliness of the Lord be upon us,
R: And the work of our hands establish.

PSALM 91

This psalm treats of the means of warding off demoniacal attacks. The psalmist shares the then universally held belief in demons and their activity. They lurked in forests and wildernesses, sometimes in the form of wild beasts, and cast their spells hither and yon, being particularly active at night. But, in his view, their evil machinations are to be brought to nought, not by magic acts and enchantments, nor yet by the help of wizards and witches, but by placing one's self under the protection of Yahweh.

Moffatt and Oesterley agree in shifting the latter part of verse 4 to the end of verse 7. Considerations of both logic and poetic balance impel to the conclusion that this was its original position.

Verse 8: "Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold, and see the recompense of the wicked," is omitted as being out of harmony with the context and disturbing the flow of thought. It is evidently a marginal note that crept into the text.

1. V: Blessed is he who abideth under the shelter of the Most High,
R: Who lodgeth under the shadow of the Almighty.
2. V: Who saith of the Lord: "My refuge,
R: My fortress, my God, in whom I trust."
3. V: For he delivereth thee from the net,
R: He preserveth thee from the destructive word;*
4. V: With his pinion he covereth thee,
R: And under his wings thou findest refuge;
5. V: Thou wilt not fear the terror at night,
R: Nor the arrow that flieth by day;#
6. V: The pestilence that roameth in darkness,
R: Nor the plague that destroyeth at noon;
7. V: A thousand shall fall beside thee,
R: And ten thousand at thy right hand;
V: To thee it shall not come nigh ,
4. R: A shield and buckler is his truth.
9. V: For, as for thee, the Lord is thy refuge,
R: Thou hast made the Most High thy stronghold;
10. V: No evil shall befall thee,
R: Nor plague come nigh to thy tent;
11. V: For his angels he will give charge over thee,
R: To keep thee in all thy ways;
12. V: Upon their hands they will bear thee,
R: Lest thou strike thy foot against a stone;
13. V: On lion and adder shalt thou tread,
R: Shalt trample on young lion and dragon.

* Spell used by witches to force demons to inflict injury, cause sickness, or even encompass the death of a victim.

In the Midrash on the Psalms it is taught that "there is a harmful spirit that flies like a bird and shoots like an arrow."

PSALM 92

1. V: Good it is to give thanks to the Lord,
R: And to sing praise to thy name, O Most High,
2. V: To tell of thy lovingkindness in the morning,
R: And of thy faithfulness in the nights,
3. V: With a ten-stringed harp,
R: With soft playing on the lyre.
4. V: For thou hast made me glad through thy doings,
R: I shout for joy because of the works of thy hands.
5. V: How great are thy works, O Lord!
R: Thy thoughts are very deep!
6. V: A brutish man knoweth this not,
R: And a fool doth not understand it.
7. V: When the wicked sprout like grass
R: And all the workers of iniquity flourish,
8. V: It is only that they may be destroyed for ever;
R: But thou art on high for evermore.
9. V: For, lo, thine enemies, O Lord,
R: For, lo, thine enemies shall perish,
V: All the workers of iniquity shall be scattered.
10. V: But thou hast exalted my horn like that of a wild-ox,
R: Thou hast poured out upon me fresh oil.
11. V: I feast mine eyes on my defeated foes,
R: I hear with joy mine enemies' doom.
12. V: The righteous flourisheth like a palm tree,
R: He groweth like a cedar in Lebanon;
13. V: They are planted in the house of the Lord,
R: They flourish in the courts of our God;
14. V: Even in old age do they bear fruit,
R: They are full of sap, and green,
15. V: Showing that the Lord is righteous,
R: My Rock, in whom is no unrighteousness.

PSALM 93

One of the psalms sung at the ceremony of Yahweh's Enthronement.

1. V: The Lord is become King,
Apparelled in Majesty;
R: Apparelled is the Lord,
Girded with strength.
V: Yea, he hath established the world, it shall not be moved;
2. R: Established is his throne from of old,
V: From everlasting art thou, O Lord.
3. V: The floods rose up, O Lord,
R: The floods raised up their roar,
V: The floods raised up their crashing.
4. V: More glorious than the roar of many waters,
R: More glorious than the raging of the sea,
V: Is the Lord, glorious on high.
5. V: Thy testimonies are very sure,
R: Holiness becometh thine house,
R: O Lord, for evermore.

PSALM 94

Metre predominantly 3:3, but vv. 9-12 have two beats to the half-line. This change of metre, coinciding with a difference in subject-matter, adds special emphasis. In the synagogue worship this must have been especially effective when sung, for at that point the musical accompaniment, too, undoubtedly underwent a change.

1. V: A God of vengeance is the Lord;
R: O God of vengeance, shine forth!
2. V: Lift up thyself, O Judge of the earth,
R: Render to the proud their desert.
3. V: How long shall the wicked, O Lord,
R: How long shall the wicked exult?
4. V: They brag, they speak arrogantly,
R: They boast themselves, all the workers of iniquity.
5. V: They crush down thy people, O Lord,
R: And thine inheritance they afflict;
6. V: Widow and orphan do they slay,
R: And murder the stranger and the downtrodden;
7. V: And they say: "The Lord seeth it not,
R: The God of Jacob observeth it not."
8. V: Be understanding, ye brutish ones among the people,
R: Yea, ye foolish ones, when will ye exercise wisdom?

9. V: He that planted the ear,
R: Doth he not hear?
V: He that formed the eye,
R: Doth he not see?
10. V: He that instructeth the peoples,
R: Doth he not chastise?
V: He that teacheth men,
R: Doth he not have knowledge?
11. V: The Lord knoweth
the thoughts of man,
R: That they are vain;
12. V: Blessed is the man
whom thou instructest, Lord,
R: And teachest from thy law,

13. V: That he may have patience in evil days,
R: Till the pit be digged for the wicked.
14. V: For the Lord will not cast off his people,
R: Nor forsake his inheritance;
15. V: Nay, the righteous shall come into his own,
R: His latter end be that of the upright in heart.

PSALM 94 (cont.)

16. V: Who will rise up for me against the evildoers,
R: Who will stand up for me against the workers of iniquity?
17. V: Unless the Lord had been my help,
R: My soul had dwelt in silence.
18. V: When I said: "My foot slippeth,"
R: Thy love, Lord, upheld me.
19. V: When many were the anxieties within me,
R: Thy comfort refreshed my soul.
20. V: Wilt thou have anything to do with the throne of wickedness,
R: Which imagineth mischief as a law?
21. V: They lie in wait against the soul of the righteous,
R: And condemn innocent men.
22. V: But the Lord is my strong tower,
R: And my God is the Rock of my defence;
23. V: And he hath recompensed unto them their iniquity,
R: And because of their wickedness he doth annihilate them.
V: The Lord, our God, doth annihilate them.

PSALM 95

This psalm was sung by worshippers on the way to the temple. Even at the present day the Jews use it as one of the special psalms for Morning Prayer on the Sabbath. This usage has been followed by the Christian Church from very early times, though its use has not been restricted to the Lord's Day only.

The Venite is a conflation of parts of this psalm and Psalm 96.

1. V: O come, let us sing unto the Lord,
R: Let us cry out for joy to the Rock of our salvation.
2. V: Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving,
R: Let us shout unto him with psalms.
3. V: For the Lord is a great God,
R: And a great King above all gods.
4. V: In his hand are all the corners of the earth,
R: And the peaks of the mountains are his also.
5. V: The sea is his, and he made it,
R: And the dry land--he formed it.
6. V: O come, let us worship and bow down,
R: Let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.
7. V: For he is the Lord our God,
R: And we are the people whom he shepherds.

V: Would that today ye would hearken unto his voice:

8. V: "Harden not your heart as at Meribah,
R: As on the day of Massah, in the wilderness,
9. V: When your fathers doubted me,
R: And tested me, though they had seen my works.
10. V: Forty years had I loathing
R: Against that generation, and said:
V: 'A people erring of heart are they,
R: And they have not known my ways';
11. V: So that I swore in my wrath,
R: 'They shall not enter into my rest.'"

PSALM 96

An "Enthronement" psalm. Probably sung at the New Year's Festival.

1. V: O sing unto the Lord a new song,
R: Sing unto the Lord, all the earth;
2. V: Sing unto the Lord, bless his name,
R: Show forth his salvation from day to day;
3. V: Declare among the nations his glory,
R: Among all the peoples his wondrous works.
4. V: For great is the Lord, and highly to be praised,
R: Terrible is he beyond all gods;
5. V: For all the gods of the peoples are things of nought,
R: But the Lord made the heavens;
6. V: Honour and majesty are before him,
R: Strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

7. V: Ascribe unto the Lord, ye kindreds of the peoples,
R: Ascribe unto the Lord glory and strength,
8. V: Ascribe unto the Lord the glory of his name,
R: Brings presents and come into his courts.
9. V: Worship the Lord in holy array,
R: Entreat his favour, all the earth.
10. V: Declare among the nations: The Lord is become King;
R: He hath established the world, it shall not be moved.

11. V: Let the heavens be glad, let the earth rejoice,
R: Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof.
12. V: Let the field exult, and all that is in it,
R: Yea, let all the trees of the forest shout for joy
13. V: Before the Lord, for he cometh
R: For he cometh to judge the earth,
V: To judge the world in righteousness,
R: And the peoples in his faithfulness.

PSALM 97

An "Enthronement" psalm; eschatological; apocalyptic.

1. V: The Lord is become King, let the earth rejoice,
R: Let the multitude of the isles be glad.
2. V: Clouds and darkness are round about him,
R: Righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne;
3. V: Fire goeth before him,
R: And burneth his adversaries round about.
4. V: His lightnings lighten the world,
R: The earth seeth it, and trembleth,
5. V: The mountains melt like wax,
R: Before the Lord of all the earth.
6. V: The heavens declare his righteousness,
R: And all the peoples behold his glory.
7. V: All that serve graven images shall be ashamed,
R: That boast themselves in things of nought,
V: Worship him, all ye gods.
8. V: Zion heareth, and is glad,
R: The daughters of Judah* rejoice,
V: Because of thy judgments, O Lord.
9. V: For thou art the Most High over all the earth,
R: Thou art exalted far above all gods.
10. V: The Lord loveth them that hate evil,
R: He keepeth the souls of his godly ones,
V: He delivereth them from the hand of the wicked.
11. V: Light ariseth upon the righteous,
R: And joy to the upright of heart.
12. V: Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous,
R: And give thanks to his holy name.

* By the "daughters of Judah" are meant the daughter-cities of Zion.

PSALM 98

Belongs to "Enthronement of Yahweh" group. Eschatological. "Prophetic perfect" tense used in reference to coming world order.

1. V: Sing unto the Lord a new song,
R: For he hath done marvellous things;
V: His right hand hath holpen him,
R: And his holy arm.
2. V: The Lord hath made known his salvation,
R: Before the eyes of the nations hath he revealed his righteousness.
3. V: He remembered his love and his faithfulness,
R: To the house of Israel;
V: All the ends of the earth have seen
R: The salvation of our God.
4. V: Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth;
R: Break forth, shout for joy, and sing praise;
5. V: Sing praise to the Lord with the harp,
R: With the harp and the sound of praise;
6. V: With trumpets and the blast of the ram's horn,
R: Make a joyful noise before the King;
7. V: Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof,
R: The world and the dwellers therein;
8. V: Let the streams clap their hands,
R: Let the mountains shout for joy together,
9. V: Before the Lord, for he cometh,
R: For he cometh to judge the earth;
V: He judgeth the world in righteousness,
R: And the peoples with equity.

PSALM 99

Another "Enthronement" psalm. Divided into two parts, each ending with a refrain.

1. V: The Lord is become King, let the peoples tremble,
R: He sitteth upon the cherubim, let the earth shake.
2. V: The Lord is great in Zion,
R: And exalted is he above all the peoples;
3. V: Let them praise his name, great and terrible,
R: Holy is he, (4) and a might King;
V: "Thou hast established equity in Jacob,
R: Justice and righteousness hast thou ordained."
5. V: Exalt ye the Lord our God,
R: And prostrate yourselves at his footstool,
VR: FOR HOLY IS THE LORD OUR GOD.

6. V: Moses and Aaron among his priests,
R: And Samuel among those that called upon his name,
V: They called unto the Lord, and he answered them;
7. R: In the pillar of cloud spake he unto them;
V: They heard his decrees and the law that he gave them;
8. R: "O Lord, our God, thou didst answer them,
V: A forgiving God hast thou been to them,
R: Yet an avenger of their misdeeds."
9. V: Exalt ye the Lord our God,
R: And worship at his holy hill,
VR: FOR HOLY IS THE LORD OUR GOD.

PSALM 100

Sung by a procession of worshippers as they drew near to the gates of the temple to sacrifice the thank-offering. Purely liturgical in character. Its brevity points to its being introductory to the sacrificial service.*

Appears in the Book of Common Prayer as one of the Morning Prayer canticles: The Jubilate Deo. The Prayer Book rendition is followed below.

1. V: O be joyful in the Lord, all ye lands;
R: Serve the Lord with gladness, and come before his presence with a song.
2. V: Be ye sure that the Lord he is God; it is he that had made us,
and not we ourselves;
R: We are his people and the sheep of his pasture.
3. V: O go your way into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts
with praise;
R: Be thankful unto him, and speak good of his Name.
4. V: For the Lord is gracious, his mercy is everlasting;
R: And his truth endureth from generation to generation.

* Oesterley, op. cit., p. 480.

PSALM 100

(Alternative Arrangement.*)

1. V: Shout for joy to the Lord, all the land!
2. V: Serve the Lord with gladness!
R: Enter into his presence with a ringing cry!
3. V: Know that the Lord is God!
He made us, and we are his,
R: His people, and the sheep of his pasture.
4. V: Enter his gates with thanksgiving,
His courts with praise!
R: Give thanks unto him, bless his name!
5. V: For the Lord is good;
His love is eternal;
R: And his faithfulness endureth throughout the ages.

* A conflation of the translations of Smith and Oesterley.

PSALM 101

The utterances of a ruler--whether an actual ruler or an imaginary one is debatable.

Moffatt's translation is adopted both for its clarity and for its logical parallelism.

1. V: I will be kind and just
before thee, O Eternal;
2. R: Let a just man's case come up,
and I will deal with it.
V: I will live uprightly in my own house,
3. R: I will have no base aims.
V: Apostates and their practices I hate;
R: They appeal not to me.
4. V: I banish purposes perverse,
R: I disown evil men.
5. V: If a man slander secretly his fellow,
I silence him;
R: If any man is proud and haughty,
I will not suffer him.
6. V: I look out for the faithful in the land,
to have them at my court;
R: Men of integrity shall be my ministers;
7. V: Deceitful men shall not dwell in my household,
R: No man who tells a lie has a position with me,
8. V: I will be active to wipe out all the wicked* from the land,
R: To root out every evil doer from the Eternal's city.

* "All the wicked" is substituted for "all wicked natives." The word "natives" used only by Moffatt; not in AV, Coverdale, Oesterley, Smith, or JPSA. Otherwise, Moffatt's translation used without change.

PSALM 101

(Alternative arrangement)

1. V: I will exercise mercy and justice,
R: I will take heed unto the Lord;
2. V: I will act wisely in an upright manner of life,
R: Truth shall agide with me;
V: I will walk in integrity of heart
R: Within my house,
3. V: I will not set before mine eyes
R: A base thing;
V: An act of apostasy I hate,
R: It shall not cleave to me.
4. V: A perverted heart shall depart from me,
R: I will not know evil.
5. V: He that secretly slandereth his neighbour,
R: Him will I destroy;
V: He that hath an high look, and an arrogant heart,
R: I will not suffer.
6. V: Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful in the land,
R: That they may dwell with me,
V: He that walketh in a perfect way,
R: He shall minister unto me.
7. V: Not in my house shall he dwell
R: That acteth deceitfully,
V: He that speaketh lies shall not be established
R: Before mine eyes.
8. V: Every morning will I destroy
R: All the wicked of the land;
V: To cut off from the city of the Lord
R: All the workers of iniquity.

Oesterley'd translation is used in the above, except that "Yahweh" has been changed to "the Lord."

PSALM 102

This psalm is the outpouring of one who is a victim of sickness, pain, and enmity. Verses 12-22 are evidently a later insertion; they disturb the continuity of thought and have nothing in common with the rest of the psalm. Moreover, if the closing verse were omitted, the psalm would have a more logical ending.

1. V: O Lord, hear my prayer,
R: And let my cry come unto thee.
2. V: Hide not thy face from me,
R: In the day of my distress, O Lord;
V: Incline thine ear unto me,
R: When I call, haste to answer me.
3. V: For my inward parts waste away like smoke,
R: And my bones glow like a hearth.
4. V: Smitten like grass is my heart,
R: For I forget to eat my food.
5. V: I am weary with the sound of my groaning,
R: My flesh cleaveth to my bones.
6. V: I am like a pelican in the wilderness,
R: I am like an owl in ruined places;
7. V: I watch and I groan,
R: Like a solitary bird on the housetop.
8. V: All the day mine enemies taunt me,
R: Those who deride me curse by me.*
9. V: For I eat ashes like bread,
R: And I mingle my drink with weeping,
10. V: Because of thine indignation and thy wrath,
R: For thou didst take me up, and didst cast me away.
11. V: My days decline like a shadow,
R: And I am withered like grass.

-
12. V: But thou, O Lord, abidest for ever,
R: And thy memorial from generation to generation.
 13. V: Thou wilt arise and have mercy on Zion.
R: For the time is come to be gracious unto her,
 14. V: For thy servants have a delight in her stones,
R: And look graciously upon her dust;
-

* The thought is, that his enemies use his name in an oath, thereby bringing a curse upon him.

PSALM 102 (cont.)

15. V: Then shall the nations fear thy name,
R: And all the kings of the earth thy glory.
16. V: For the Lord doth build up Zion,
R: And shall appear in his glory in the midst of her.
17. V: He hath regard unto the prayer of the destitute,
R: And despiseth not their supplication:
18. V: Let this be written down for the generation to come,
R: And a people that shall be created shall praise the Lord.
19. V: For he looked down from his holy height,
R: From heaven he beheld the earth,
20. V: To hear the sighing of the prisoner,
R: To release those condemned to death,
21. V: That the name of the Lord may be proclaimed in Zion,
R: And his praise in Jerusalem,
22. V: When the peoples are gathered together,
R: And the kingdoms, to serve the Lord.
-
23. V: My strength too soon is exhausted,
R: A cutting off of my days is decreed for me;
24. V: Snatch me not away in the midst of my days,
R: Thou whose years are throughout all generations.
25. V: Of old thou didst found the earth,
R: And the heavens are the work of thine hands;
26. V: They may perish, but thou wilt endure,
R: Yea, they all may wear out like a garment,
V: Like a vesture mayest thou change them and they will change,
27. R: But thou art the same and thy years have no end.
28. V: The children of thy servants shall continue,
R: And their seed shall be established before thee.

PSALM 102
(Alternative arrangement)

1. V: O Lord, hear my prayer,
R: And let my cry come unto thee.
2. V: Hide not thy face from me
R: In the day of my distress, O Lord;
V: Incline thine ear unto me,
R: When I call, haste to answer me;
3. V: For my inward parts waste away like smoke,
R: And my bones glow like a hearth.
4. V: Smitten like grass is my heart,
R: For I forget to eat my food.
5. V: I am weary with the sound of my groaning,
R: My flesh cleaveth to my bones.
6. V: I am like a pelican in the wilderness,
R: I am like an owl in ruined places;
7. V: I watch and I groan,
R: Like a solitary bird on the housetop.
8. V: All the day mine enemies taunt me,
R: Those who deride me curse by me.
9. V: For I eat ashes like bread,
R: And I mingle my drink with weeping,
10. V: Because of thine indignation and thy wrath,
R: For thou didst take me up, and didst cast me away.
11. V: My days decline like a shadow,
R: And I am withered like grass.
23. V: My strength too soon is exhausted,
R: A cutting off of my days is decreed for me;
24. V: Snatch me not away in the midst of my days,
R: Thou whose years are throughout all generations.
25. V: Of old thou didst found the earth,
R: And the heavens are the work of thine hands;
26. V: They may perish, but thou wilt endure,
R: Yea, they all may wear out like a garment;
V: Like a vesture mayest thou change them and they will change,
27. R: But the same art thou, and thy years have no end.

Note: This arrangement omits verses 12-22 and 28. Verses 12-22 disrupt the continuity of thought and introduce subject-matter different from the rest of the psalm; verse 27 offers a more logical conclusion to the psalm than verse 28.

PSALM 103

1. V: Bless the Lord, O my soul,
R: Yea, all within me, his holy name.
2. V: Bless the Lord, O my soul,
R: And forget not all his benefits:
3. V: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities,
R: Who healeth all thy diseases,
4. V: Who redeemeth thy life from the Pit,
R: Who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies,
5. V: Who satisfieth thee with good as long as thou livest,
R: So that thy youth is renewed like the eagle.
6. V: The Lord executeth righteous acts,
R: And justice for all that are oppressed,
7. V: He made known his ways unto Moses,
R: His doings unto the children of Israel.
8. V: Merciful and gracious is the Lord,
R: Longsuffering, and plenteous in loving kindness;
9. V: For he chideth not for ever,
R: Nor is he resentful everlastingly.
10. V: He doth not deal with us according to our sins,
R: Nor doth he recompense us according to our iniquities.
11. V: For as high as the heavens above the earth,
R: So high is his love over them that fear him;
12. V: As far as the east from the west,
R: So far hath he put our transgressions from us;
13. V: As a father hath compassion on his children,
R: So hath the Lord compassion on them that fear him;
14. V: For he knoweth our frame,
R: He remembereth that we are but dust.
15. V: As for man, his days are like grass,
R: As a flower of the field, so doth he flourish,
16. V: For the wind passeth over it, and it is not,
R: And the place thereof knoweth it no more.
17. V: But the love of the Lord is on them that fear him,
R: And his righteousness is to children's children.
18. V: To them that keep his covenant and his commandments,
R: To them that remember his statutes, to do them.
19. V: The Lord in the heavens hath established his throne,
R: And his kingdom ruleth over all.
20. V: Bless the Lord, ye angels of his,
R: Ye, mighty in strength, that fulfil his command;
21. V: Bless the Lord, all ye his host,
R: Ye servants of his that do his will.
22. V: Bless the Lord, all ye his works,
R: In all places of his dominion.
VR: Bless the Lord, O my soul.

PSALM 104

1. VR: Bless the Lord, O my soul;
My God, thou art very great;
V: Who art clothed with majesty and honour,
2. R: Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment;
V: Who spreadest out the heavens like a canopy,
3. R: Who layeth the beams of the upper chambers in water,
V: Who maketh clouds his chariot,
R: Who goeth forth on the wings of the wind,
4. V: Who maketh winds his messengers,
R: Fire and flame his ministers.
5. V: Who founded the earth upon its pillars,
R: That it might nevermore be moved.
6. V: The Deep covered it like a garment,
R: Upon the mountains did the waters stand;
7. V: At thy rebuke they fled,
R: At the sound of thy thunder they hurried away;
9. V: A bound thou didst set which they should not pass over,
R: Nor cover the earth again.
8. V: The mountains rose, the valleys sank down,
R: To the place which thou hadst founded for them.
10. V: He sendeth forth streams into the valleys,
R: They run among the mountains;
11. V: They give drink to all the beasts of the field,
R: The zebras quench their thirst;
12. V: Beside them the birds of the air abide,
R: From among the branches they give forth their song.
13. V: He watereth the mountains from his upper chambers,
R: From the moisture of thy heavens the earth is sated,
14. V: Causing the grass to grow for the cattle,
R: And herb for the service of man;
V: Causing food to come forth from the earth,
15. R: And wine, to cheer up man's heart,
V: Oil, to make his face to shine,
R: And bread to strengthen man's heart;
16. V: The trees of the Lord drink their fill,
R: The cedars of Lebanon which he planted,
17. V: Where the birds make their nests,
R: And the stork, whose home is the cypress.
18. V: The mightiest mountains are for the wild goats,
R: The rocks a refuge for the conies.
19. V: He made the moon for indicating seasons,
R: He made the sun to know its going down;

PSALM 104 (cont.)

20. V: Thou makest darkness that it may be night,
R: When all the beasts of the forest creep forth;
21. V: The young lions roaring after their prey,
R: To seek their meat from God;
22. V: Thou causest the sun to rise, they get them away,
R: And they lay them down in their dens.
23. V: Man goeth forth unto his work,
R: And to his labour until the evening.
24. V: How manifold are thy works, O Lord!
R: The earth is full of thy creatures!
25. V: There is the sea, great and wide,
R: Wherein are things creeping innumerable,
V: Beasts small and great,--
R: In wisdom hast thou made them all;
26. V: There go the sea-monsters,
R: Leviathan, whom thou madest to sport therein.
27. V: These all wait upon thee,
R: That thou mayest give them their food in due season;
28. V: Thou givest it to them, they gather it up,
R: Thou openest thine hand, they are satisfied with good.
29. V: Thou hidest thy face, they are dismayed,
R: Thou withdrawest their breath, they die,
V: And unto the dust they return.
30. V: Thou sendest forth thy breath, they are created,
R: And thou renewest the face of the earth.
31. V: May the glory of the Lord endure for ever,
R: May the Lord rejoice in his works;
32. V: Who looketh on the earth, and it trembleth,
R: He toucheth the mountains and they smoke.
33. V: I will sing to the Lord while I live,
R: I will sing to my God while I have my being.
34. V: May my meditation be pleasing unto him,
R: I will rejoice in the Lord.
35. V: May sinners be consumed from the earth,
R: May the wicked be no more.
VR: Bless the Lord, O my soul!
Hallelujah!

PSALM 105

1. V: Give thanks to the Lord,
Call upon his name,
R: Make known among the peoples his doings!
2. V: Sing unto the Lord, sing praises unto him,
R: Be speaking of all his wondrous acts!
3. V: Glorify yourselves in his holy name!
R: Let the heart of those who seek the Lord rejoice;
4. V: Enquire of the Lord and his strength,
R: Seek his face continually,
5. V: Remember his marvellous works which he hath done,
R: His wonders, and the judgments of his mouth,
6. V: O ye seed of Abraham, his servant,
R: Ye sons of Jacob his chosen.
7. V: He is the Lord our God,
R: His judgments are in all the world.
8. V: He remembereth his covenant for ever--
R: The word which he commanded to a thousand generations--
9. V: Which he made with Abraham,
R: And his oath to Isaac;
10. V: And he confirmed it to Jacob for a statute,
R: To Israel for an everlasting covenant:
11. V: "To you will I give
the land of Canaan,
R: The lot of your inheritance."
12. V: When they were but few men in number,
R: Yea, very few, and strangers therein,
13. V: Then went they about from nation to nation,
R: From one kingdom to another people;
14. V: Her permitted not a man to harm them,
R: And rebuked kings for their sakes:
15. V: "Touch not mine anointed ones,
R: And do my prophets no harm."
16. V: When he called for a famine on the land,
R: And broke every staff of bread,
17. V: Then sent he a man before them,
R: Joseph was sold as a slave;
18. V: They hurt his feet with fetters,
R: His neck entered into the iron,
19. V: Until the time that his word came to pass;
R: The saying of the Lord proved true;
20. V: The king sent and loosed him,
R: The ruler of peoples, and set him free;
21. V: He made him lord of his house,
R: And ruler of all his substance,
22. V: To teach his princes according to his will,
R: And to instruct all his elders.

PSALM 105 (cont.)

23. V: And Israel came into Egypt,
R: And Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham.
24. V: And he made his people very fruitful,
R: And made them stronger than their adversaries,
25. V: He turned their heart to hate his people,
R: To deal subtilly with his servants.
26. V: He sent Moses his servant,
R: And Aaron whom he had chosen;
27. V: He wrought among them his signs by their word,
R: And wondrous things in the land of Ham:
28. V: He sent darkness and made it dark,
R: But they observed not his words;
29. V: He turned their waters into blood,
R: And slew all their fish;
30. V: Their land swarmed with frogs,
R: And they entered into the chambers of the king;
31. V: He commanded, and there came swarms of flies,
R: And gnats in all their region;
32. V: He gave them hail for rain,
R: And flaming fire in their land;
33. V: He smote their vines and fig trees,
R: And brake the trees in their border;
34. V: He commanded, and the locust came,
R: And the cankerworm, yea, without number,
35. V: And ate up every herb in their land,
R: And consumed the fruit of their ground;
36. V: And he smote all the firstborn in their land,
R: The best of all their strength.
37. V: And he brought them forth with silver and gold,
R: There was not one that stumbled among their tribes.
38. V: Egypt was glad when they went forth,
R: For the fear of them had fallen upon them.
39. V: He spread a cloud for a covering,
R: And fire to give light at night.
40. V: They asked, and there came quails,
R: And he satisfied them with bread from heaven.
41. V: He opened the rock, and waters gushed out,
R: They ran in dry places, a river.
42. V: For he remembered his holy word
R: With Abraham his servant.
43. V: And he brought forth his people with joy,
R: And his chosen ones with shouting;
44. V: And he gave them the lands of the nations,
R: And they took the labours of the peoples in possession;
45. V: That they might keep his statutes,
R: And observe his laws.
- Hallelujah!

PSALM 106

Like Psalms 78 and 105, this psalm contains a retrospect of early Israelite history. Written by one living in the Dispersion (note v. 47), it affords an interesting indication of the contact between the Jews of the Dispersion with their brethren in the homeland.

1. V: Hallelujah!
O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good,
R: For his lovingkindness endureth for ever!
2. V: Who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord,
R: Or make all his praise to be heard?
3. V: Blessed are they that observe justice,
R: That do righteousness at all times.
4. V: Remember us, Lord, in the favour towards thy people,
R: Visit us with thy help,
5. VR: That we may see the prosperity of thy chosen ones,
That we may rejoice in the joy of thy nation,
That we may glory with thine inheritance.
6. V: We have sinned with our fathers,
R: We have committed iniquity, and we have done wickedly.
7. V: Our fathers in Egypt
R: Understood not thy wondrous acts;
V: They remembered not the abundance of thy lovingkindnesses,
R: They rebelled against the Most High at the sea of reeds;
8. V: But he helped them for his name's sake,
R: That he might make his power to be known.
9. V: He rebuked the sea of reeds that it dried up,
R: And he led them through depths as through pasture-land;
10. V: And he delivered them from the hand of the hater,
R: And redeemed them from the clutch of the enemy.
11. V: And the waters covered their adversaries,
R: Not one of them was left.
12. V: They believed they his words,
R: Whereupon they sang his praise.
13. V: They soon forgot his works,
R: And waited not for his counsel;
14. V: But they lusted exceedingly in the wilderness,
R: And tempted God in the desert;
15. V: And he gave them their request,
R: And sent food according to their desire.
16. V: And they envied Moses in the camp,
R: And Aaron, the holy one of the Lord.
17. V: The earth opened, and swallowed up Dathan,
R: And covered the company of Abiram;
18. V: And fire was kindled in the company,
R: And flame burned up the wicked.

PSALM 106 (cont.)

19. V: They made a calf in Horeb,
R: And worshipped a molten image,
20. V: And they changed their glory
R: For the likeness of an ox that eateth grass;
21. V: They forgot God their saviour,
R: Who did great things in Egypt,
22. V: Wondrous things in the land of Ham,
R: Terrible things at the sea of reeds,
23. V: And he said that he would destroy them,
R: But for mo^ses, his chosen;
V: He stood in the breach before him,
R: To turn away his wrath from destroying them.
24. V: And they despised the pleasant land,
R: And trusted not in his word.
25. V: And they murmured in their tents,
R: And hearkened not unto the voice of the Lord.
26. V: Therefore he lifted up his hand against them,
R: To overthrow them in the wilderness,
27. V: And to disperse their seed among the nations,
R: And to scatter them in the lands.
28. V: And they joined themselves to Baalpeor,
R: And ate the sacrifices of the dead.*
29. V: And they provoked him to anger by their deeds,
R: And the plague brake in among them;
30. V: But Phinehas stood up and medi^{at}ed,
R: And the plague was stayed,
31. V: And it was reckoned unto him for righteousness
R: To generations and generations for ever.
32. V: And they angered him at the waters of Meribah,
R: And it went ill with Moses for their sakes;
33. V: For they had embittered his spirit,
R: So that he spake unadvisedly with his lips.
34. V: They did not destroy the peoples,
R: As the Lord had commanded them,
35. V: But mingled themselves among the nations,
R: And learned their works;
36. V: And they served their idols,
R: And they became a snare unto them;
37. V: And they sacrificed their sons
R: And their daughters to demons,
38. V: And they poured out innocent blood,
R: And the land was polluted with blood.

* i.e., the sacrifices offered to the dead.

PSALM 106 (cont.)

39. V: They became unclean by their deeds,
R: And went a-whoring in their doings.
40. V: Then was the wrath of the Lord kindled against his people,
R: And he abhorred his inheritance.
41. V: And he gave them into the hand of the nations,
R: And they that hated them ruled over them.
42. V: Their enemies also oppressed them,
R: And they were bowed down under their hand.
43. V: Many times did he deliver them,
R: But they rebelled against his purpose.
44. V: Nevertheless he regarded their distress
R: When he heard their cry;
45. V: And he remembered for them his covenant,
R: And repented according to the abundance of his lovingkindness;
46. V: He made them objects of compassion also
R: Among all who had taken them captive.
47. V: Save us, O Lord our God,
R: And gether us from among the nations,
V: That we may give thanks to thy holy name,
R: And triumph in thy praise.
- 48.* VR: BLESSED BE THE LORD,
THE GOD OF ISRAEL,
FROM HENCEFORTH
AND FOR EVERMORE;
AND LET ALL THE PEOPLE SAY: "AMEN."
HALLELUJAH!
-

* A benediction closing Book IV.

PSALM 107

A psalm of thanksgiving written after the Dispersion had taken place, and doubtless sung at one of the great festivals, probably the Feast of Tabernacles--though in the later Synagogue service it was one of the proper psalms for the Passover feast.*

Verses 1-3 are introductory; then follow four strophes of unequal length, marked by refrains. (The refrains are indicated below by capital letters.)

Verses 33 to end contain no word of thanksgiving, have no refrain, and differ in both subject-matter and form from the rest of the psalm. They are evidently not a part of the original psalm, but a later addition.

1. V: "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good:
R: For his mercy endureth for ever."
2. V: So let them say whom the Lord hath redeemed,
R: Whom he hath gathered from the hand of the enemy,
3. V: Whom he hath gathered out of the lands,
R: From east and west,
from north and south.
4. V: They that wandered in desert and waste,
R: The way to inhabited city they found not;
5. V: Hungry, yea, and thirsty,
R: Their soul within them fainted.
6. V: THEY CRIED UNTO THE LORD IN THEIR NEED,
R: OUT OF THEIR DISTRESSES HE DELIVERED THEM;
7. V: He led them upon the right way,
R: To go to the city of habitation;
8. V: LET THEM THANK THE LORD FOR HIS LOVE,
R: FOR HIS WONDER-WORKS TO THE CHILDREN OF MEN!
9. V: For he satisfied the parched soul,
R: And the hungry he filled with good.
10. V: Such as dwelt in darkness, and deep gloom,
R: Being bound in affliction and iron--
11. V: For they had rebelled against the words of God,
R: And contemned the counsel of the Most High,--

* Oesterley, op. cit., p. 455

PSALM 107 (cont.)

12. V: But he humbled their heart with hard labour,
R: They stumbled, and there was none to help;
13. V: THEY CRIED UNTO THE LORD IN THEIR NEED,
R: OUT OF THEIR DISTRESSES HE DELIVERED THEM;
14. V: He brought them out of darkness and deep gloom,
R: And their binding cords he snapped;
15. V: LET THEM THANK THE LORD FOR HIS LOVE,
R: FOR HIS WONDER-WORKS TO THE CHILDREN OF MEN;
16. V: For he shattered the gates of bronze,
R: And the bars of iron he hewed asunder.
17. V: Fools, for their way of transgression
R: And for their iniquities were afflicted;
18. V: All food their soul abhorred,
R: They drew nigh to the gates of death;
19. V: THEY CRIED UNTO THE LORD IN THEIR NEED,
R: OUT OF THEIR DISTRESSES HE DELIVERED THEM;
20. V: He sent forth his word to heal them,
R: To deliver them from their destruction;
21. V: LET THEM THANK THE LORD FOR HIS LOVE,
R: FOR HIS WONDER-WORKS TO THE CHILDREN OF MEN;
22. V: Let them offer sacrifices of thanksgiving,
R: And declare his works with a shout of joy.
23. V: They that went down to the sea in ships,
R: That did business in great waters
24. V: These saw the works of the Lord,
R: And his wonders in the deep;
25. V: For he spake and raised up the stormwind,
R: Which lifted its billows in high;
26. V: They were carried up to the heavens,
down again to the depths,
R: Their soul melted in their distress,
27. V: They reeled and staggered like a drunken man,
R: And were at their wit's end;
28. V: THEY CRIED UNTO THE LORD IN THEIR NEED,
R: OUT OF THEIR DISTRESSES HE DELIVERED THEM;
29. V: He stilled the storm to a whisper,
R: The waves of the sea were hushed,
30. V: Then they rejoiced because they were quiet,
R: And he brought them to their desired haven;
31. V: LET THEM THANK THE LORD FOR HIS LOVE,
R: FOR HIS WONDER-WORKS TO THE CHILDREN OF MEN;
32. V: Let them exalt him in the assembly of the people,
R: And praise him in the company of the elders.
-

PSALM 107 (cont.)

33. V: He turneth rivers into a wilderness,
R: And watersprings into a thirsty land,
34. V: A fruitful ground to salt-land,
R: For the wickedness of the dwellers therein.
35. V: He turneth the wolderness into a pool,
R: And parched land into watersprings;
36. V: There causeth he the hungry to abide,
R: And they establish a city to dwell in;
37. V: They sow fields,
they plant vineyards,
R: That bring forth fruits of increase;
38. V: He blesseth them and they yield abundantly,
R: And he suffereth not their cattle to decrease.
39. V: He poureth contempt on princes,
R: And maketh them wander in a pathless waste,
41. V: But he lifteth up the poor from his affliction,
R: And maketh him families like a flock.
42. V: Let the righteous see it and rejoice,
R: And all iniquity close its mouth.
43. V: Whoso is wise, let him heed these things,
R: Let him consider the lovingkindnesses of the Lord.
-

Verse 39, "Again, they are minished and brought low through oppression, affliction, and sorrow," may be an insertion by a later copyist. In any case, it disturbs the continuity of thought and has, accordingly, been omitted from this arrangement.

PSALM 108

This psalm consists of two extracts: vv. 1-5 are taken from Ps. 57:7-11, and vv. 6-13 from Ps. 60:5-12. There are, however, slight variations.

1. V: My heart is fixed, O God,
R: My heart is fixed,
V: I will sing and make melody to thee,
R: Thou art my glory.
2. V: Awake, harp and lyre,
R: I will awaken the dawn.
3. V: I will give thanks to thee among the peoples, O Lord,
R: I will make melody to thee among the nations.
4. V: For great is thy love, unto the heavens,
R: And unto the skies thy truth;
5. V: Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens,
R: And above all the earth thy glory.

6. V: In order that thy beloved may be delivered,
R: Save with thy right hand, and answer us.
7. V: God hath spoken in his holiness;
"I will exult, I will divide Shechem,
And mete out the valley of Sukkoth:
8. Gilead is mine, Manasseh is mine,
Ephraim is the defence of my head,
Judah is my staff:
9. Moab is my washpot,
Over Edom will I cast my shoe,
Over Philistia will I shout."

10. V: Who will lead us to the fenced city?
R: Who will bring us unto Edom?
11. V: Hast thou not, O God, cast us off?
R: Thou goest not forth, O God, with our hosts.
12. V: Give us help against the adversary,
R: For vain is the help of man,
13. V: With God we shall do valiantly,
R: Yea, he will tread down our adversaries.

PSALM 109

This psalm belongs in the realm of magical texts rather than of religious literature. Not only are there imprecatory elements (in common with certain other psalms) but this psalm is marked by exaggerated vindictiveness. It is not surprising that the Jews early recognized that its vindictive spirit rendered it unfitting for use in public worship.

1. V: O God of my praise, be not silent,
2. R: For the mouth of wickedness is opened against me.
V: They speak against me with a lying tongue,
3. R: And words of hatred encompass me,
V: And they fight against me without cause;
4. R: In place of my love they accuse me,
V: And they return evil for good,
R: And hatred in place of my love.
6. V: Set thou over him a wicked man,
R: And let an accuser stand at his right hand;
7. V: When he is judged let him be condemned,
R: And his sentence be suited to his sin.
8. V: Let his days be few,
R: And his office let another take;
9. V: Let his children be fatherless,
R: And let his wife be a widow.
10. V: Let his sons be vagabonds, and beg,
R: And let them be driven forth from their company.
11. V: Let the extortioner ensnare all that he hath,
R: And let strangers plunder his gains.
12. V: Let him not have one that extendeth him kindness,
R: Nor one that hath pity on his orphans;
13. V: Let his posterity be cut off,
R: In one generation let his name be blotted out.
14. V: Let the iniquity of his father be remembered,
R: And the sin of his mother, let it not be blotted out;
15. V: Let them be before the Lord continually,
R: That he may cut off his memory from the earth.
16. V: Because he remembered not to show mercy,
But persecuted the afflicted and poor,
R: And the broken of heart to death;
17. V: Since he loved cursing, let it o'ertake him,
R: Since he desired not blessing, let it be far;
18. V: Yea, since he put on cursing like his garment,
Let it come like water to his inner part,
R: And like oil into his bones;
19. V: Let it be to him like raiment wherewith he clotheth himself,
R: And like a girdle wherewith he always girdeth himself.
20. V: This be the recompense of mine accusers,
R: And of them that speak evil against my soul.

PSALM 109 (cont.,)

21. V: But thou, O Lord, act on my behalf,
R: Oh rescue me in thy kind love!
22. V: For afflicted and needy am I,
R: And my heart is pierced within me;
23. V: Like a shadow when it lengthens I go hence,
R: I am swept away like a locust, and am no more.
24. V: My knees totter through fasting,
R: And my flesh is lean, without fatness,
25. V: I am become a reproach to them,
R: They look at me, they shake their head.
26. V: Help me, O Lord, my God,
R: Save me in thy great mercy,
27. V: That they may know that this is thy hand,
R: That thou, O Lord, hast done it.
28. V: Let them curse, but do thou bless,
R: Let mine adversaries be ashamed, but let thy servant rejoice;
29. V: Let mine accusers be clothed with dishonour,
R: And let them clothe themselves with their shame like a mantle.
30. V: I will greatly give thanks to the Lord with my mouth,
R: And in the midst of many will I praise him.
31. V: For he standeth at the right hand of the needy,
R: To save him from them that persecute his soul.

PSALM 110

Few of the psalms have been subjected to more diverse interpretation than this one. The text is corrupt in parts. There is considerable difference of opinion among scholars on many points.

We have adopted the interpretation of Oesterley:*

The psalm opens with an "Oracle" which the psalmist has received from God in reference to his lord, i.e., the king. This oracle is contained in verse 1; then the psalmist goes on to address the king in his own behalf. He even refers to him as "God" in accordance with the ancient belief in divine kingship. He is to rule in the midst of his foes, princes are to be his slaves. Yahweh has ordained him a "priest-king." On him had fallen, in accordance with an old-world conception, the heavenly "dew" which comes at "dawn" and confers eternal youth on whomever it falls. In order to "lift up the head" of the king, Yahweh will reveal himself as one mighty in battle (cf., e.g., Ps. 24:8), scattering the enemies and drenching the hills and valleys with blood and making the rivers incarnadine.

1. V: Oracle of the Lord to my lord:
R: "Sit at my right hand
V: Until I make thine enemies
R: A stool for thy feet."
2. V: Thy mighty sceptre stretch forth,
R: O God, from Zion;
V: Rule thou in the midst of thy foes,
3. R: Thine are the princes.
V: In the day of thy birth thou wast honoured,
R: Sanctified from the womb;
V: From the dawn cometh forth
R: The dew of thy youth.
4. V: The Lord hath sworn,
R: He will not repent,
V: "Thou art a priest for ever,
R: Of the order of Melkizedek."
5. V: The Lord doth shatter in the day of his wrath;
6. R: Kings doth he judge;
V: With corpses he filleth the valleys,
R: Maketh red the hills;
V: He watereth the brooks with their blood;
R: Therefore he lifteth up thy head.

* Op. cit., pp. 461 ff.

PSALM 111

This is an acrostic psalm in which each line begins with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet, in order. It represents a departure from the normal form of Hebrew poetry. A line normally consists of two halves divided by a hiatus, each half-line having its regular beats. In this psalm many of the half-lines are self-contained entities. In verses 1, 2, 6, 7, and 8 the two halves belong together, but in all the other verses the half-line is self-contained.

The opening words suggest that this psalm was sung as a solo in the presence of the Temple congregation.

In the light of the above considerations, and inasmuch as these arrangements are designed to bring out the parallelism and metre resident in Hebrew poetry, it has been deemed inadvisable to attempt an arrangement of this particular psalm.

PSALM 112

This is an acrostic of the same character as the preceding psalm. Indeed it may well have been written by the same author: the opening words echo the conclusion of the former; there are certain identities of expression; the wisdom element of the preceding psalm is further developed in this one.

As in Psalm 111, fidelity to acrostic arrangement takes priority over parallelism; therefore we shall not attempt an arrangement of this psalm for responsive reading.

PSALM 113

The first of the group of psalms known as the "Hallel" ("Praise")--namely, Psalms 113-118. Often referred to as the "Egyptian Hallel" (in reference to 114:;, "When Israel went forth from Egypt") to distinguish it from the group 146-148, which, on account of the frequently expressed note of praise, was also called "Hallel." This group, however, is usually spoken of as "The Hallel." These psalms were the special ones for the great festivals, Passover, Tabernacles, Weeks, and, later, Dedication.

1. V: Hallelujah!
Praise, ye servants of the Lord,
R: Praise the name of the Lord!
2. V: Blessed be the name of the Lord,
R: From henceforth, even for ever!
3. V: From the rising of the sun to the going down thereof,
R: The name of the Lord be praised!
4. V: Exalted over all nations is the Lord,
R: His glory is above the heavens.
- 5a. V: Who is like the Lord our God
- 6b. R: In heaven and earth,
- 5b. V: That dwelleth on high,
- 6a. R: That looketh down below?
7. V: He raiseth the poor from the dust,
V: From the ash-heap he lifteth the needy,
8. V: Making him to sit with princes,
R: With the princes of his people;
9. V: Causing the barren to dwell in a house,
R: A joyful mother of children.

PSALM 114

1. V: When Israel went forth from Egypt,
R: The house of Jacob from a people of strange tongue,
2. V: Judah became his sanctuary,
R: Israel his dominion.
3. V: The sea saw it, and fled,
R: Jordan turned backwards;
4. V: The mountains skipped like rams,
R: The hills like the young of the flock.
5. V: What aileth thee, O sea, that thou fleest,
R: O Jordan, that thou turnest backwards?
6. V: Ye mountains, that he skip like rams,
R: Ye hills, like the young of the flock?
7. V: Tremble, O earth, at the presence of the Lord,
R: At the presence of the God of Jacob,
8. V: Who turned the rock to a pool,
R: The flint to a spring of water!

PSALM 115

Oesterley observes*:

"The construction of this psalm points clearly to its liturgical use; which parts were sung by the priests, the temple choir, and the congregation, respectively, cannot well be decided with certainty; the opinions of commentators differ on the subject. The divisions of the psalm are, however, fairly obvious, and help to indicate by whom the different parts were sung. Thus, vv. 1-8, by their content and by the use of the plural, "not unto us," "our God is in the heavens," suggest that they were sung by the temple choir and the congregation. Vv. 9-11, with the threefold refrain, were undoubtedly sung antiphonally, perhaps by a priest and the congregation, the latter taking up the refrain. Vv. 12-15, as the contents indicate, were sung by the priests; and the final verses, 16-18, by priests, temple choir, and congregation."

This suggests the basis of the arrangement below.

CHOIR AND CONGREGATION (in unison)

1. Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us,
but unto thy name give glory,
because of thy love and thy truth.
2. Wherefore should the nations say;
"Where, then, is their God?"
3. But our God is in the heavens,
whatsoever he pleased hath he done.
4. Their idols are silver and gold,
the work of the hands of man.
5. A mouth is theirs, but they speak not;
eyes have they, but see not;
6. Ears have they, but hear not;
a nose have they, but smell not;
7. Hands have they, but feel not;
Feet have they, but walk not;
Nor speak they through their throat.
8. So be it with their makers,
with all who trust in them.

MINISTER AND CONGREGATION (responsively)

9. V: O Israel, trust in the Lord,
R: THEIR HELP AND SHIELD IS HE;
10. V: House of Aaron, trust in the Lord,
R: THEIR HELP AND SHIELD IS HE;
11. V: Ye that fear the Lord, trust in the Lord,
R: THEIR HELP AND SHIELD IS HE.

* Op. cit., p. 472.

PSALM 115 (cont.)

MINISTER

12. May the Lord remember us and bless us,
May he bless the house of Israel,
May he bless the house of Aaron,
13. May he bless them that fear the Lord,
the small ones with the great;
14. May the Lord give you increase,
to you and to your children.
15. Blessed are ye of the Lord,
the maker of heaven and earth.

EVERYONE (in unison)

16. The heavens are the Lord's heavens,
but the earth he gave to men.
17. The dead praise not the Lord,
nor all that go down into silence;
18. But we will bless the Lord,
from henceforth for evermore.
Hallelujah!

PSALM 116

Whether or not this psalm is a unity is a difficult question. The Septaugint makes two psalms of it; viz., vv. 1-9 and 10-19.

In the latter part of the psalm there is evidently some dislocation of lines, for the ritual acts are not mentioned in the proper order; namely, the offering of the sacrifice, the drink-offering, the vows. In the arrangement below we have somewhat re-arranged a few of the verses so as to provide a logical sequence. We have omitted v. 14, which is identical to v. 18.

1. V: I love the Lord, for he heareth
R: The cry of my supplication;
2. V: For he inclined his ear unto me
R: In the day I cried.
3. V: The cords of death encompassed me
R: The ropes of Sheol encircled me;
V: Trouble and distress I experienced;
4. R: But I called on the name of the Lord:
V: "Oh, Lord, deliver my soul"
5. V: Gracious is the Lord, and righteous,
R: Yea, our God is merciful;
6. V: The Lord preserveth the helpless,
R: I languish, and he helpeth me.
7. V: Return, O my soul, to thy rest,
R: For the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.
8. V: He delivered my soul from death,
Mine eyes from tears,
My feet from stumbling.
9. R: I will walk before the Lord
In the land of the living.
10. V: I trusted in the Lord, and spake:
R: "I am greatly humbled":
11. V: For I said in my alarm:
R: "All trust is in vain."
12. V: How shall I make return to the Lord
R: For all his benefits to me?
17. V: I will offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving,
R: And call on the name of the Lord;
13. V: The cup of deliverance will I raise,
R: And call on the name of the Lord;

PSALM 116 (cont.)

18. V: My vows to the Lord will I pay
R: In the presence of all his people,
19. V: In the courts of the house of the Lord,
R: In the midst of thee, O Jerusalem.
15. V: Precious in the eyes of the Lord
R: Is the death of his saints.
16. V: Ah, Lord,
I am thy servant;
R: I am thy servant,
A son of thy people;
V: Thou hast loosed my bonds.
R: Hallelujah!

PSALM 117

Evidently a fragment which has become detached from its context.

1. V: Praise the Lord, all ye nations,
R: Laud him, all ye peoples,
2. V: For his love over us is great,
R: And the faithfulness of the Lord is everlasting.
Hallelujah!

PSALM 118

The last psalm compassing the Hallel. Internal evidence suggests that it was originally an "individual" psalm, later adapted (with additions) to liturgical worship. It was one of the proper psalms for the Feast of Tabernacles.

"The insight into the liturgical ritual and worship of the temple during post-exilic times which this psalm gives, makes it, from this point of view, one of the most important in the Psalter."--Oesterley.*

Sung during ascent of the procession of worshippers to the temple, in the court of the temple, and, finally, inside the temple.

The assignment of parts as given below, while not set forth dogmatically, does seem logical.

If a choir is present a fine effect may be obtained by having the parts taken as follows:

Priest or minister -- Parts assigned to Priest

Choir -- Levitical choir.

Someone appointed from congregation -- Solos by worshipper and versicles
assigned to him

Someone appointed from choir -- Leader of Levitical choir

Congregation -- Congregation.

This would seem to be the preferred way of rendering it. It would produce a stirring effect. However, if this manner of rendition be inexpedient, then let the minister take the V's, the congregation the R's.

ANTIPHONAL. -- PRIEST AND LEVITICAL CHOIR IN OUTER COURT OF TEMPLE, BUT INSIDE GATES, AWAITING ARRIVAL OF PROCESSION OF WORSHIPPERS

1. V: Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good,
R: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER.
2. V: Let the house of Israel say:
R: "FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER."
3. V: Let the house of Aaron say:
R: "FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER."
4. V: Let them that fear the Lord say:
R: "FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER."

"INDIVIDUAL" -- SOLO BY ONE OF WORSHIPPERS ASCENDING HILL OF ZION TO SANCTUARY

5. (V): In distress I called on the Lord,
He brought me forth in freedom.
6. The Lord is mine, I fear not
What men may do unto me;
7. The Lord is mine, he helpeth me,
And I look in triumph on foes.
8. 'Tis better to trust in the Lord
Than confide in man;
9. 'Tis better to trust in the Lord
Than confide in princes.

PSALM 118 (cont.)

ANTIPHONAL. -- SOLOIST AND CONGREGATION STILL ASCENDING HILL.

10. V: All the nations surrounded me,
R: IN THE NAME OF THE LORD I TROD THEM DOWN;
11. V: They surrounded me, yea, they surrounded me,
R: IN THE NAME OF THE LORD I TROD THEM DOWN;
12. V: They surrounded me like bees the honeycomb,
R: IN THE NAME OF THE LORD I TROD THEM DOWN.

INDIVIDUAL. -- SOLO BY ONE OF WORSHIPPERS

13. (V): I was sorely thrust at that I might fall,
But the Lord helped me.
14. My strength and refuge is the Lord,
And he is become my deliverer.

ANTIPHONAL. -- SOLOIST AND WORSHIPPERS IN PROCESSION
TO SANCTUARY

15. V: Hark, a cry of joy and victory
R: In the tents of the righteous;
V: The right hand of the Lord doeth mightily,
16. R: The right hand of the Lord is exalted.

INDIVIDUAL. -- SOLO BY ONE OF WORSHIPPERS

17. (V): I shall not die, but live,
And recount the works of the Lord.
18. The Lord did chasten me sorely,
But to death he did not deliver me.
21. I will thank thee because thou hast answered me,
And art become my deliverer.

(WORSHIPPERS ARRIVE AT TEMPLE GATES.)

SOLO. -- REPRESENTATIVE OF WORSHIPPERS, OUTSIDE GATES.

19. (R): Open to me the gates of righteousness,
I will enter them and praise the Lord.

PRIEST FROM WITHIN

20. (V): This is the gate of the Lord,
The righteous shall enter therein.

PSALM 118 (cont.)

ANTIPHONAL. -- CONGREGATION AND LEVITICAL CHOIR OUTSIDE IN
TEMPLE COURT

22. V: The stone which the builders rejected,
R: Has become the chief cornerstone;
23. V: From the Lord hath this come to pass,
R: It is a wonder-work in our eyes.
24. V: This is the day the Lord hath ordained,
R: Let us rejoice and be glad in it.
25. V: Ah, Lord, save us now,
R: Ah, Lord, grant us prosperity.

PRIEST

26. (V): Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord,
We bless you from the house of the Lord.

(WORSHIPPERS ENTER TEMPLE.)

CONGREGATION:

27. (R): The Lord is God,
May he give us light.

SOLO. -- LEADER OF LEVITICAL CHOIR.

- (V): Marshall the procession with leafy branches,
Unto the horns of the altar.

CONGREGATION:

28. (R): My God art thou, I will thank thee,
My God, I will extol thee.

EVERYONE:

29. (VR): GIVE THANKS TO THE LORD, FOR HE IS GOOD,
FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER.

PSALM 119

This is an acrostic, which differs from all the other acrostic psalms in that the opening letter of the eight lines of each section, respectively, is the same. ~~This~~ This artificial arrangement results in repetitions that make the reading of it somewhat monotonous. That the composer is greatly indebted to the writers of other psalms, as well as to the Wisdom writers, is evident. The main purpose of the psalmist is the glorification of the Law; described in various ways: testimonies, statutes, precepts, commandments, ordinances, decrees, word; this last sometimes in the sense of "promise."

Metre: mostly 3:2.

ALEPH

1. V: Blessed are the blameless in the way,
R: Who walk in the law of the Lord.
2. V: Blessed are they that keep his testimonies,
R: That seek him with all their heart,
3. V: Who verily do no wrong,
R: Who walk in his ways.
4. V: Thou hast ordained thy precepts,
R: That we should observe them diligently.
5. V: O that my ways were steadfast
R: In keeping thy statutes;
6. V: Then should I not be ashamed
R: In heeding thy commandments.
7. V: I will thank thee in uprightness of heart
R: When I learn thy righteous judgments;
8. V: I will keep thy statutes to the full,
R: O forsake me not!

BETH

9. V: Whereby shall a young man keep his way pure?
R: By taking heed to thy word.
10. V: With all my heart have I sought thee,
R: Let me not stray from thy commandments.
11. V: In my heart have I laid up thy word,
R: That I might not sin against thee.
12. V: Blessed art thou, O Lord,
R: O teach me thy statutes.
13. V: With my lips do I tell forth,
R: All the ordinances of thy mouth.
14. V: In the way of thy testimonies do I rejoice,
R: More than over all wealth.
15. V: On thy precepts will I meditate,
R: And will contemplate thy ways;

PSALM 119 (cont.)

16. V: In thy law will I delight myself,
R: I will not forget thy word.

GIMEL

17. V: Deal bountifully with thy servant that I may live,
R: And I will observe thy word;
18. V: Unveil mine eyes that I may see
R: The wonder-works of thy law.
19. V: A stranger ~~am~~ I on earth,
R: Hide not from me thy word.
20. V: My soul is overborne with longing
R: For thy judgments at all times,
21. V: Thou rebukest the proud; accursed
R: Are they that wander from thy commandments.
22. V: Take away from me reproach,
R: For thy testimonies have I kept.
23. V: (Even princes sat, talking together against me--
R: Thy servant doth meditate in thy statutes.)
24. V: Yea, thy testimonies are my delight,
R: Thy statutes are my counsel.

DALETH

25. V: My soul cleaveth to the dust,
R: Quicken me according to thy word.
26. V: My ways I recounted, and thou didst answer me,
R: Teach me thy statutes.
27. V: Make me to understand the way of thy precepts,
R: And I will meditate on thy wonder-works.
28. V: My soul melteth for grief,
R: Raise me up by thy word.
29. V: The way of lying put away from me,
R: And graciously grant me thy law,
30. V: The way of faithfulness have I chosen,
R: Thy judgments do I desire.
31. V: I cleave unto thy testimonies,
R: O Lord, put me not to shame.
32. V: In the way of thy commandment I run,
R: For thou enlargest my heart.

PSALM 119 (cont.)

HR

33. V: Teach me the way of thy statutes,
R: And I will keep it in gratitude;
34. V: Give me understanding that I may keep thy law,
R: Yea, I will observe it with all my heart.
35. V: Lead me in the path of thy commandments,
R: For therein do I delight.
36. V: Incline my heart unto thy testimonies,
R: And not to covetousness;
37. V: Turn mine eyes from beholding vanity,
R: Quicken me according to thy word.
38. V: Confirm thy word unto thy servant,
R: Which is for them that fear thee.
39. V: Turn away the reproach that I dread,
R: For thy judgments are good.
40. V: Behold, I long for thy precepts,
R: Quicken me in thy righteousness.

VAU

41. V: May thy lovingkindnesses come unto me, Lord,
R: Thy salvation, according to thy word;
42. V: That I may answer my slanderer,
R: For I trust in thy word.
43. V: Withdraw not from my mouth the word of truth,
R: For I hope for thy judgments;
44. V: And I will observe thy law continually,
R: For ever, and ever;
45. V: Yea, I will walk in freedom,
R: For thy precepts have I sought;
46. V: Yea, I will speak of thy testimonies
R: In the presence of kings, without fear;
47. V: And I will delight myself in thy commandments
R: Which I love,
48. V: And I will lift up my hands unto thee,
R: And will meditate upon thy statutes.

PSALM 119 (cont.)

ZAIN

49. V: Remember thy word to thy servant,
R: For I wait for it.
50. V: This is my comfort in mine affliction,
R: That thy word hath quickened me.
51. V: The arrogant have me greatly in derision,
R: But I swerve not from thy law.
52. V: I remember thy judgments of old,
R: O Lord, and take comfort.
53. V: Burning wrath taketh hold of me because of the wicked,
R: Who forsake thy law.
54. V: Songs of praise have thy statutes been to me,
R: In the house of my sojourning.
55. V: In the nighttime I remember thy name,
R: And observe thy law.
56. V: This is my blessedness, Lord,
R: To keep thy precepts.

HETH

57. V: My portion is the Lord; I said,
R: "I will keep thy word";
58. V: I sought thy favour with all my heart,
R: Be gracious unto me, according to thy word.
59. V: I thought on thy ways, and turned
R: My feet unto thy testimonies.
60. V: I made haste, and I did not delay,
R: To keep thy commandments.
61. V: The cords of the wicked entangled me,
R: Thy law I did not forget.
62. V: At midnight I rise to praise thee,
R: Because of thy righteous judgments.
63. V: A companion am I to all that fear thee,
R: And to them that keep thy precepts.
64. V: The earth is full of thy love,
R: Teach me thy statutes.

PSALM 119 (cont.)

TETH

65. V: Well hast thou dealt with thy servant,
R: O Lord, according to thy word.
66. V: Teach me discretion and knowledge,
R: For I trust in thy commandments.
67. V: Before I was afflicted I was going astray,
R: But now thy word I observe.
68. V: Good art thou, and doest good,
R: Teach me thy statutes.
69. V: The arrogant have besmeared me with lies,
R: I keep thy precepts.
70. V: Gross is their heart like fat,
R: I delight in thy law.
71. V: Good for me that I was afflicted,
R: That I might learn thy statutes.
72. V: Better for me is the law of thy mouth
R: Than thousands in gold and silver.

IOD

73. V: Thy hands have made me and established me,
R: Give me understanding that I may learn thy commandments.
74. V: They that fear thee shall see me and be glad,
R: For I have hoped in thy word.
75. V: I know that thy judgments are righteous,
R: And in faithfulness thou didst afflict me.
76. V: Let, now, thy love be my comfort,
R: According to thy word to thy servant;
77. V: Let thy mercies come unto me that I may live,
R: For thy law is my delight.
78. V: Let the arrogant be ashamed, for thy wrongfully oppress me.
R: I meditate upon thy precepts.
79. V: Let those that fear thee turn unto me,
R: And those that know thy testimonies.
80. V: Let my heart be perfect in thy statutes,
R: That I be not ashamed.

PSALM 119 (cont.)

CAPH

81. V: My soul pineth for thy salvation,
R: For thy word do I hope.
82. V: Mine eyes pine for thy word,
R: When wilt thou comfort me?
83. V: Thou I am become like a wineskin in smoke,
R: I do not forget thy statutes;
84. V: How many are the days of thy servant?
R: How long till thou execute judgment on my persecutors?
85. V: The arrogant have dug pits for me,
R: They are not according to thy law;
86. V: All thy commandments are truth,
R: They persecute me without cause; help me;
87. V: Well nigh had they swept me from the earth,
R: But I forsook not thy precepts.
88. V: According to thy love quicken me that I may observe
R: The testimony of thy mouth.

LAMED

89. V: Thy word, O Lord, is for ever,
R: It standeth firm like the heavens,
90. V: Thy faithfulness is to generation and generation,
R: Thou hast established the earth, and it standeth;
91. V: According to thine ordinances they stand unto this day,
R: For all things serve thee.
92. V: Unless thy law had been my delight,
R: I should have perished in mine affliction.
93. V: I will never forget thy precepts,
R: For with them thou quickenest me.
94. V: I am thine, O save me,
R: For thy precepts have I sought.
95. V: The wicked wait for me to destroy me;
R: I give heed to thy testimonies.
96. V: To all things an end I see,
R: But thy law has a boundless range.

PSALM 119 (cont.)

MEM

97. V: How I love thy law!
R: All day it is my meditation.
98. V: Thy commandment maketh me wiser than mine enemies,
R: For it is mine for ever.
99. V: I have more understanding than all my teachers,
R: For thy testimonies are my meditation.
100. V: I have more discernment than the aged,
R: For I have kept thy statutes.
101. V: I keep back my feet from every evil path,
R: That I may observe thy word.
102. V: From thy judgments I do not swerve,
R: For thou teachest me.
103. V: How sweet to my palate are thy words,
R: Sweeter than honey to my mouth!
104. V: Through thy precepts I get understanding, therefore
R: I hate every false way.

NUN

105. V: A lamp to my feet is thy word,
R: And a light to my path.
106. V: I have sworn, and I will keep it, to observe
R: Thy righteous judgments.
107. V: I am greatly afflicted, O Lord,
R: Quicken me, according to thy word.
108. V: The offerings of my mouth accept, O Lord,
R: And teach me thy commandments.
109. V: My life is continually in my hand,
R: But thy law I forget not.
110. V: The wicked have laid for me a snare,
R: But I strayed not from thy precepts.
111. V: Mine inheritance are thy testimonies for ever,
R: For the joy of my heart are they.
112. V: I have inclined my heart to fulfil thy statutes,
R: For ever and ever.

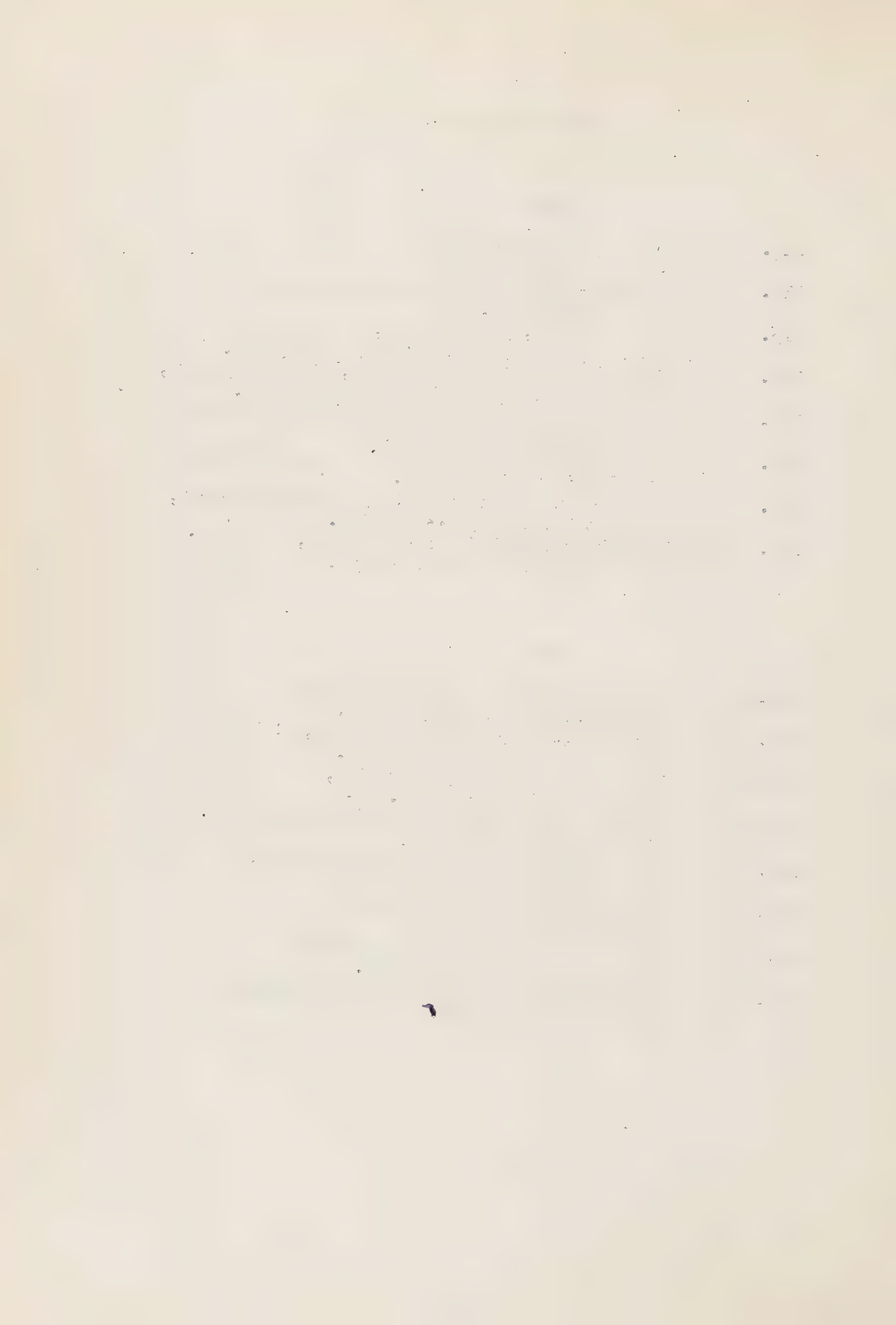
PSALM 119 (cont.)

SAMECH

113. V: I hate the double-minded,
R: But thy law do I love.
114. V: My hiding-place and my shield art thou,
R: I hope in thy word.
115. V: Depart from me, ye evildoers,
R: That I may keep the commandments of my God.
116. V: Uphold me according to thy word, that I may live,
R: And let me not be disappointed in my hope.
117. V: Hold me up that I may be safe and delight myself
R: In thy statutes continually.
118. V: Thou despisest all that err from thy statutes,
R: For false is their outlook.
119. V: Dross dost thou account all the wicked on earth,
R: Therefore I love thy testimonies.
120. V: **My** flesh trembleth for fear of thee,
R: And I am in awe of thy judgments.

AIN

121. V: I practice justice and righteousness,
R: Leave me not to mine oppressors.
122. V: Go surety for thy servant for good,
R: Let not the arrogant oppress me.
123. V: Mine eyes pine for thy salvation,
R: And for thy righteous word.
124. V: Deal with thy servant according to thy love,
R: And teach me thy statutes.
125. V: Thy servant am I, give me understanding,
R: That I may know thy testimonies.
126. V: It is time for the Lord to act,
R: They have broken thy Law.
127. V: Above all do I love thy commandments,
R: More than gold or beaten gold.
128. V: Therefore in thy precepts I walk rightly,
R: Every false way I hate.



PSALM 119 (cont.)

PE

129. V: Wonderful are thy testimonies, therefore
 R: My soul doth keep them.
130. V: The revealing of thy words giveth light,
 R: Instructing the simple.
131. V: My mouth do I open, and pant,
 R: For I long for thy commandments.
132. V: Turn unto me, and be gracious unto me,
 R: As is due to them that love thy name.
133. V: Make firm my footsteps in thy word,
 R: And let no iniquity master me.
134. V: Redeem me from the oppression of man,
 R: That I may observe thy precepts.
135. V: Make thy face to shine upon thy servant,
 R: And teach me thy statutes.
136. V: Mine eyes run down with streams of water,
 R: Because they keep not thy law.

TZADE

137. V: Righteous art thou, O Lord,
 R: And upright are thy judgments.
138. V: Thou hast issued thy decrees in righteousness,
 R: And in exceeding faithfulness.
139. V: My zeal hath o'erwhelmed me,
 R: Because mine adversaries forget thy words.
140. V: Tried and true is thy word,
 R: And thy servant loveth it.
141. V: Insignificant am I and despised,
 R: Yet I forget not thy precepts.
142. V: Thy righteousness is rightness for ever,
 R: And thy law is truth.
143. V: Trouble and anguish have come upon me,
 R: Yet is my delight in thy commandments.
144. V: Righteous are thy testimonies for ever,
 R: Give me understanding that I may love.

PSALM 119 (cont.)

KOPH

145. V: I call with all my heart, answer me,
R: Thy statutes do I observe.
146. V: I call upon thee, Lord, save me,
R: That I may keep thy precepts.
147. V: I forestall early dawn, and cry,
R: And hope for thy word.
148. V: Mine eyes forestall the nightwatches,
R: That I may meditate on thy word.
149. V: Hear my voice according to thy love,
R: Lord, quicken me, according to thy justice.
150. V: They draw nigh that persecute me wickedly,
R: They are far from thy law.
151. V: Nigh art thou, O Lord,
R: And all thy commandments are truth.
152. V: Concerning thy testimonies, I have known long since
R: That thou hast founded them for ever.

RESH

153. V: Look upon mine affliction, and deliver me,
R: For I forget not thy law.
154. V: Plead my cause, and redeem me,
R: Quicken me according to thy word.
155. V: Far from help are the ungodly,
R: For they seek not thy statutes.
156. V: Great is thy mercy, O Lord,
R: Quicken me according to thy judgments.
157. V: Many are my persecutors and mine adversaries,
R: Yet from thy testimonies have I not swerved.
158. V: I behold apostates and loathe them,
R: Because they keep not thy commandments.
159. V: See how I love thy precepts!
R: O Lord, quicken me according to thy word.
160. V: The sum of thy word is truth,
R: And all thy righteous judgments are eternal.

PSALM 119 (cont.)

SHIN

161. V: Princes persecuted me without a cause;
R: My heart standeth in awe of thy words.
162. V: I rejoice because of thy word,
R: As one that findeth great spoil.
163. V: Lying do I hate and abhor,
R: Thy law do I love.
164. V: Seven times in the day do I praise thee,
R: Because of thy righteous judgments.
165. V: Great peace have they that love thy law,
R: And there is no stumbling for them.
166. V: I hope for thy salvation, O Lord,
R: And thy commandments do I fulfil.
167. V: My soul observeth thy testimonies,
R: Yea, I love them greatly.
168. V: I observe thy precepts and thy testimonies,
R: For all my ways are before thee.

TAU

169. V: Let my cry come before thee, O Lord,
R: According to thy word give me understanding.
170. V: Let my supplication come before thee,
R: According to thy word deliver me.
171. V: Let my lips pour forth praise,
R: Because thou teachest me thy statutes.
172. V: Let my tongue sing of thy word,
R: For all thy commandments are righteousness.
173. V: Let thy hand be ready to help me.
R: For I have chosen thy precepts.
174. V: I long for thy help, O Lord,
R: And thy law is my delight.
175. V: Let my soul live, and it shall praise thee,
R: And let thy judgments help me.
176. V: Seek out thy servant in his wanderings,
R: For I forget not thy commandments.

PSALM 120

This is the first of a group of fifteen psalms (120-134, incl.) bearing the title, "Song of Ascents."

Powis Smith's translation (changed, however, to solemn style) is used below.

1. V: To the Lord in my distress
R: I call, and he answereth me.
2. V: O Lord, deliver me from lying lips,
R: From the deceitful tongue.
3. V: What will he give thee, and what more,
R: O deceitful tongue?
4. V: The sharpened arrows of the warrior,
R: With live broom coals!
5. V: Alas that I sojourn in Meshech,
R: That I dwell with the clans of Kedar!
6. V: Too long a time have I dwelt
R: With the haters of peace.
7. V: I am for peace, but when I speak,
R: They are for war!

PSALM 121

This beautiful little psalm is antiphonal in form, but who the speakers are and what parts are to be assigned to them is a matter of conjecture. In the arrangement below we have proceeded upon the following theory:

The psalm is sung by a band of pilgrims ascending the hill of Zion. One of their number, acting as leader, began with verse 1, to which his fellow-pilgrims responded with verse 2; then in verse 3 he uttered a wish, and in chorus the pilgrims reassured him, v. 4. The remainder of the psalm, vv. 5-8, is then taken up by the whole band of pilgrims in chorus.*

1. V: I lift up mine eyes to the hills!
From whence cometh my help?
2. R: "Thy help is from the Lord,
Maker of heaven and earth!"
3. V: May he not suffer my foot to slip,
May my Guardian not slumber!
4. R: "Behold, he slumbereth not,
He sleepeth not,
The Guardian of Israel!"

* Oesterley, op. cit., pp. 504-505

PSALM 121 (cont.)

5. VR: "The Lord is thy Guardian,
The Lord is thy defense
At thy right hand,
6. That the sun may not smite thee by day,
Nor the moon by night;
7. The Lord doth shield thee from all harm,
He guardeth thy soul;
8. The Lord doth guard thy going out and coming in
From now until evermore."

PSALM 122

"In this psalm the psalmist recalls his visit to Jerusalem on the occasion of one of the festivals. In the opening verse he tells of his delight on hearing of the intention of a number of his fellow-citizens ... to make the pilgrimage. It was necessary for a number to join together for this purpose because the journey would be hazardous if undertaken by a single individual; the danger of robbers was ever present ... Then, in the next verse, the psalmist pictures to himself how they had all stood together on entering the Holy City. The remainder of the psalm is a song of praise glorifying Jerusalem."--Oesterley, Op. cit. p. 504 f.

Verse 5 may be an editorial addition or later interpolation. So thinks Moffatt. The psalm reads better with the omission of this verse.

1. V: I was glad when they said unto me:
R: "We are going to the house of the Lord!"
2. V: Our feet stood
R: Within thy gates, O Jerusalem.
3. V: Jerusalem--built like a city
R: That uniteth us together;
4. V: Thither the tribes go up,
R: The tribes of the Lord;
V: It is a law for Israel, to give thanks
R: Unto the name of the Lord.
5. V: For there were the seats of justice,
R: The royal tribunals of David.
6. V: O pray for the peace of Jerusalem,
R: May they prosper that love thee;
7. V: May peace be within thy ramparts,
R: Quietude within thy palaces.
8. V: For my brethren and companions' sake
R: I will say: "Peace be within thee."
9. V: For the sake of the house of the Lord, our God,
R: I will pray for thy welfare.

PSALM 123

1. V: Unto thee do I lift up mine eyes,
R: O thou that dwellest in the heavens!
2. V: Behold, as the eyes of slaves
R: Toward the hand of their lord,
V: As the eyes of a maid
R: Toward the hand of her mistress,
V: So are our eyes toward the Lord, our God,
R: Until he have mercy upon us.
3. V: Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy upon us,
R: For we are sated with contempt;
4. V: Greatly sated is our soul
R: With the mockery of the proud.

PSALM 124

1. V: "If the Lord had not been for us,"
R: Let Israel now say:
2. V: "If the Lord had not been for us,
R: When men rose up against us,
3. V: Then had they swallowed us alive
R: When their wrath was kindled against us;
4. V: Then had the waters swept us away,
R: The torrent had gone over our soul;
5. V: Then had gone over our soul
R: The raging waters.
6. V: Blessed be the Lord,
R: Who hath not delivered us
As a prey to their teeth.
7. V: Our soul did escape like a bird
From the snare of the fowlers;
R: The snare is broken,
And we have escaped.
8. V: Our help is in the name of the Lord,
R: Maker of heaven and earth."



PSALM 125

1. V: They that trust in the Lord are like mount Zion;
R: It shall not be moved, it abideth for ever.
2. V: Jerusalem! the hills are around her,
R: And the Lord is around his people.
3. V: For the sceptre of the wicked
Shall not rest
On the lot of the righteous,
R: That the righteous put not forth
Their hand to iniquity.
4. V: Do good, O Lord, to the good
R: And to the upright in heart;
5. V: But them who turn aside on their crooked ways
R: He will abandon with the workers of iniquity.

PSALM 126

The word translated "restoration" is a technical term. It was used by the prophets to refer to the bringing back of the time of primeval happiness, the "Golden Age."

The "Negeb," a proper name, referred to the southern district of Palestine, an arid district leading into the desert proper. In the summer-time the streambeds were for the most part dry, but in the rainy season the streams bubbled forth with overflowing water. "The poetical psalmist, then compares the present untoward condition of the people with the period of the arid, waterless Negeb during the summer months, and offers the prayer that this condition may be changed and give place to happy times, just as the dried-up watercourses in due time become running streams."*

1. V: When the Lord bringeth back
The restoration of Zion
R: We shall be as those who dream;
2. V: Then shall our mouth be filled with laughter,
R: And our tongue with shouting;
V: Then will they say among the nations,
R: "The Lord hath done great things for them."
3. V: The Lord hath done great things for us,
R: We are joyful.
4. V: Bring back, O Lord, our restoration
R: As streams in the Negab.
5. V: They that sow with tears
R: Shall reap with shouting;
6. V: He that goeth weeping,
R: Bearing his seed-sack,
V: Shall surely come with shouting,
R: Bearing his sheaves.

* Oesterley, op. cit., p. 516

PSALM 127

This psalm, consisting of two independent fragments, vv. 1, 2 and 3-5, belongs to the Wisdom literature. Though independent, they stand together appropriately, for they deal, respectively, with building in a literal and in a metaphorical sense: the building of a house, and the building up of a family.

The metre in the first fragment is almost uniformly 3:3; that in the second fragment, both 3:3 and 3:2.

1. V: If the Lord doth not build the house,
R: They labour in vain that build it.
V: If the Lord doth not guard the city,
R: The watchman watcheth in vain.
2. V: If the Lord doth not grant prosperity,
R: In vain do ye rise up early,
V: Taking rest so late,
R: Eating the bread of toil.
3. V: Behold, sons are the heritage of the Lord,
R: His gift is the fruit of the womb;
4. V: Like arrows in the hand of a warrior,
R: So are the sons of one's youth;
5. V: Happy is he that filleth
R: His quiver with them,
V: He shall not be ashamed when he speaketh
R: With his enemies in the gate.

PSALM 128

This psalm is written in the style of the Wisdom writers. The sage pictures in his mind's eye a God-fearing man--in this case a man of the peasant class--then goes on to apostrophize him as though he were actually present.

3:2 metre prevails, though a half-line seems to have fallen out of v.5.

1. V: Happy is everyone that feareth the Lord,
R: That walketh in his ways:
2. V: The labour of thy hands thou dost eat,
R: Happy art thou, and well it is with thee;
3. V: Thy wife is like a fruitful vine,
R: Within thy house;
V: Thy sons are like shoots of olive trees
R: About thy table.
4. V: Behold, thus is the man blest
R: That feareth the Lord.
5. V: May the Lord bless thee from Zion . . .
And mayest thou see the welfare of Jerusalem
R: All the days of thy life;
6. V: And mayest thou see thy sons' sons.
R: Peace upon Israel.

PSALM 129

1. V: "Greatly have they afflicted me from my youth up,"
R: Well may Israel say;
2. V: "Greatly have they afflicted me from my youth up,"
R: Yet they prevailed not against me;
3. V: On my back the ploughers ploughed,
R: Made long their furrows,
4. V: But the Lord is righteous, he hast cut asunder
R: The cord of the wicked."

5. V: Let them be put to shame, and turned backward,
R: All that hate Zion;
6. V: Let them be like the grass on housetops,
R: Which the east wind blighteth,
7. V: Wherewith the reaper filleth not his hand,
R: Nor the binder his bosom,
8. V: And they that pass by do not say:
R: "The Lord's blessing on you,
We bless you in the name of the Lord."

PSALM 130

1. V: Out of the depths do I cry unto thee, O Lord,
2. R: Hear my voice;
V: Let thine ears give heed
R: To the cry of my application.
3. V: If thou, Lord, shouldst retain iniquities,
R: Who could stand?
4. V: But with thee is forgiveness,
R: That thou mayest be feared.
5. V: I wait for the Lord,
R: My soul doth wait.
V: I hope for his word.
6. R: My soul for the Lord!
V: More than watchers for the morn,
R: Than watchers for the morn!
7. V: O Israel, wait for the Lord,
For with the Lord is love,
R: And with him is plenteous redemption;
8. V: And he redeemeth Israel
R: From all his sins.

PSALM 131

This three-verse psalm is one of the most beautiful, if indeed not the most beautiful, psalm of trust in the whole of the Psalter.

We have omitted v. 2c not only because it is repetitious, but because it gives a half-line too much.

1. V: O Lord, my heart is not presumptuous,
R: Nor arrogant mine eyes,
V: Nor do I ponder things too great,
R: Too wonderful, for me;
2. V: Truly I have stilled, have quieted my soul,
R: Like a weaned child on its mother.
3. V: O Israel, wait for the Lord
R: From henceforth and for ever.

PSALM 132

1. V: O Lord, remember David,
R: Thy servant, and all his affliction,
2. V: How he sware to the Lord,
R: Vowed to the Mighty One of Jacob;
3. V: "I will not enter the habitation of my house
R: Nor ascend the couch of my resting place,
4. V: I will not give sleep to mine eyes,
R: Nor to mine eyelids slumber,
5. V: Until I find a place for the Lord,
R: A dwelling for the Mighty One of Jacob."
6. V: Lo, we heard of it in Ephratah,
R: We found it in the fields of Ja'ar;
7. V: Let us go unto his dwellingplace,
R: Let us worship at the stool of his feet.
8. V: Arise, Lord, to thy resting-place,
R: Thou and thy mighty Ark!
9. V: Let thy priests be rightly clothed,
R: And thy saints let them shout for joy.
10. V: For the sake of David thy servant,
R: Reject not thine own anointed.
11. V: The Lord did sware to David--
R: Of a truth, he will not turn from it:
V: "I will set up thy seed after thee,
R: And I will establish the throne of thy kingdom.
12. V: If thy sons keep my covenant
R: And my testimonies which I teach them,
V: Their sons also forever
R: Shall sit upon thy throne."

PSALM 132 (cont.)

13. V: For the Lord hath chosen Zion,
R: Hath desired it for his habitation:
14. V: "This is my resting-place for ever,
R: Here will I abide, for I have desired it.
15. V: Her food supply will I greatly bless,
R: Her poor will I satisfy with food;
16. V: Her priests will I clothe with prosperity,
R: And her saints shall shout for joy.
17. V: There will I cause to flourish the horn of David,
R: I have prepared a lamp for mine anointed;
18. V: His enemies will I clothe with shame,
R: But on him shall his crown glisten."

PSALM 132
(ALTERNATIVE ARRANGEMENT)

The liturgical character of this psalm is evident. In the ancient temple worship, according to Oesterley,* "a solo voice sang vv. 1, 2; another singer took up vv. 3-5; whereupon the temple choir sang vv. 6-10. It may be surmised that vv. 11, 12 were sung by a soloist, after which another solo voice sang the remainder of the psalm."

The arrangement below, while not exactly according to that scheme, is patterned after it.

Minister

1. O Lord, remember David, thy servant, and all his affliction,
2. How he swore to the Lord, vowed to the Mighty One of Jacob:

Someone else in Chancel

3. "I will not enter the habitation nor ascend the couch of my resting-
of my house, place,
4. I will not give sleep to mine eyes, nor to mine eyelids slumber,
5. Until I find a place for the Lord, a dwelling for the Mighty One of
Jacob."

Congregation

6. Lo, we heard of it in Ephratah we found it in the fields of Ja'ar;
7. Let us go unto his dwellingplace, let us worship at the stool of
his feet.
8. Arise, Lord, to thy resting-place, thou and thy mighty Ark!
9. Let thy priests be rightly clothed, and thy saints let them shout
for joy.
10. For the sake of David thy servant, reject not thine own anointed.

* Op. cit., p. 529.

PSALM 132 (cont.)

Minister

11. The Lord did swear to David-- of a truth he will not turn from it;
"I will set up thy seed after thee, and I will establish the throne
of thy kingdom.
12. If thy sons keep my covenant and my testimonies which I teach them,
Their sons also forever shall sit upon thy throne."

Another Voice from Chancel, Someone from Congregation, or Entire Congregation

13. For the Lord hath chosen Zion hath desired it for his habitation:
14. "This is my resting-place forever, here will I abide, for I have
desired it.
15. Her food supply will I greatly bless, her poor will I satisfy with
food;
16. Her priests will I clothe with prosperity, and her saints shall
shout for joy.
17. There will I cause to flourish I have prepared a lamp for mine
the horn of David, anointed;
18. His enemies will I clothe with shame, but on him shall his crown
glisten."

PSALM 133

A psalm extolling the ancient Levirate marriage custom in which the sons even after marriage continued to live with their families under the same roof as the patriarch, thus perpetuating family solidarity, union, and continuity.

1. V: Behold, how goodly and how beautiful,
R: The dwelling together of brethren!
2. V: Like precious oil it is upon the head,
R: Which runneth down upon the beard,
V: The beard of Aaron; which runneth down
R: Upon the collar of his garments;
3. V: Like the dew of Hermon, which runneth down
R: Upon the hills of Iyyon; *
V: For there the Lord commanded
R: Life for evermore.

* "The Hebrew text has "the hills of Zion"; but the dew of Hermon, far away to the north, could not possibly run all the way through Palestine to get to Zion; as Barnes remarks, it is "geographically a grotesque conception" . . . Jirku, followed by Gunkel, is surely right in reading "Iyyon" for "Zion"; it is mentioned in I Kgs. 15:20, II Kgs. 15:29, II Chron. 16:4, and refers to the hilly country which lay on the southwest foot of mount Hermon. The two words in Hebrew are almost exactly alike; nothing could be easier than for a copyist to have misread what was before him. It is also worth noting that the Hebrew reads "hills"; the "hill of Zion" occurs very frequently, but the "hills of Zion" never." --- Oesterley, op. cit., p. 536.

PSALM 134

The last of the collection of psalms bearing the title "Song of Ascents." It was sung on the eve of one of the great festivals, probably Tabernacles, as a preparation for divine service on the part of God's ordained ministers. The High-Priest sang the first two verses, the other priests responding with the closing verse.

1. V: Bless the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord,
Who stand in the house of the Lord by night!
2. Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the Lord!
3. R: May the Lord, maker of heaven and earth, bless thee from Zion.

PSALM 135

1. V: Praise the name of the Lord,
R: Praise, ye servants of the Lord,
2. V: Who stand in the house of the Lord,
R: In the courts of the house of our God.
3. V: Praise the Lord, for he is good,
R: Sing praise to his name, for it is beautiful;
4. V: For Jacob hath the Lord chosen for himself,
R: Israel for his peculiar treasure.
5. V: For I do know that the Lord is great,
R: That our Lord is greater than all the gods.
6. V: The Lord hath done whate'er he willed,
R: In heaven and earth, the seas and all deeps;
7. V: He bringeth up mists from the ends of the earth,
He maketh lightnings for the rain,
R: He bringeth forth wind from his treasures.
8. V: He smote the firstborn of Egypt,
R: From man even unto beasts;
9. V: He sent signs and wonders
R: Against Pharoah and all his servants;
10. V: He smote great nations,
R: And slew mighty kings:
11. V: Sihon, king of the Amorites,
R: And Og, the king of Bashan,
V: And all the kingdoms of Canaan;

PSALM 135 (cont.)

12. V: And he gave their land for an heritage,
R: An heritage for Israel, his people.
13. V: "O Lord, thy name is everlasting,
R: O Lord, thy remembrance is unending!"
14. V: For the Lord vindicateth his people,
R: And hath compassion on all his servants.
15. V: The idols of the nations
are silver and gold,
the work of the hands of men;
16. R: Mouths have they, but speak not,
eyes have they, but see not,
17. ears have they, but hear not,
noses have they, but smell not.
18. V: Like them are they that make them,
R: And all that trust in them.
19. V: House of Israel, bless the Lord;
R: House of Aaron, bless the Lord;
20. V: House of Levi, bless the Lord;
R: Fearers of the Lord, bless the Lord.
21. V: Blessed be the Lord in Zion,
R: Who dwelleth in Jerusalem.

(Alternative arrangement, based on the stanza principle.)

This logical structure provides the basis of the arrangement below.

1. Praise the name of the Lord, praise, ye servants of the Lord,
2. Who stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of
 our God.
3. Praise the Lord, for he is good, sing praise to his name, for it
 is beautiful;
4. For Jacob hath the Lord chosen Israel for his peculiar treasure.
 for himself,

5. For I do know
that greater is the Lord,
our Lord, than all gods.

6. All that he willed
hath the Lord done,
in heaven and earth,
the seas and all deeps;

7. He bringeth up mists
from the ends of the earth;
He maketh lightnings for the rain,

he bringeth forth wind from
his treasures.

8. He smote the firstborn of Egypt, from man even unto beasts;
9. He sent signs and wonders against Pharaoh and all his servants;
10. He smote great nations, and slew mighty kings;
11. Sihon, king of the Amorites, and Og, the king of Bashan,
And all the kingdoms of Canaan;
12. And he gave their land for an heritage for Israel, his people.
heritage
13. "O Lord, thy name is everlasting, O Lord, thy remembrance is unending!"
14. For the Lord vindicateth his people, and hath compassion on all
his servants.

PSALM 135 (cont.)

Congregation

15. The idols of the nations
 are silver and gold,
 the work of the hands of men;
16. Mouths have they, but speak not,
 eyes have they, but see not,
17. ears have they, but hear not,
 noses have they, but smell not.
18. Like them are they that make them, and all that trust in them.

Minister

19. House of Israel, bless the Lord; house of Aaron, bless the Lord;
20. House of Levi, bless the Lord; fearers of the Lord, bless the Lord.
21. Blessed be the Lord in Zion, who dwelleth in Jerusalem.

PSALM 136

In the Talmud and other Rabinnical writings this psalm is known as the "Great Hallel." Its form is unique in the Psalter. The first half of each verse was sung by one of the priests, or perhaps by the whole Levitical choir, while the second half, taken from II Chron. 7:3, 6, was sung by the whole body of worshippers. It will be noticed that in reading the first half of the verses alone we have a self-contained and independent psalm. This suggests that the refrain was not an original part of the psalm, especially since it comes in incongruously in certain of the verses (observe especially vv. 10, 15, 17-20), but was added later for liturgical purposes.

It is quite possible, too, that the historical references are a later addition. Certain it is that if verses 10-24, incl., are omitted, we have a loftier and at the same time a more logical psalm.

1. V: Give thanks to the Lord, for his is good,
R: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER;
2. V: Give thanks to the God of gods,
R: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER;
3. V: Give thanks to the Lord of lords,
R: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER;
4. V: Who alone doeth wonder-works,
R: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER;
5. V: Who made the heavens with wisdom,
R: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER;
6. V: Who spread forth the earth on the waters,
R: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER;
7. V: Who made great lights,
R: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER;
8. V: The sun to rule by day,
R: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER;
9. V: The moon to rule by night,
R: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER;
10. V: Who smote Egypt in their firstborn,
R: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER;
11. V: And brought out Israel from their midst,
R: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER;
12. V: With mighty hand and outstretched arm,
R: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER;
13. V: Who cut Yam-suph in twain, *
R: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER.

* "In speaking of the dividing of the Yam-suph, "the sea of reeds," (usually, but erroneously, rendered the Red Sea, it was the eastern arm of the Red Sea, now known as the Aelanitic gulf), the psalmist uses a curious, but expressive, term never elsewhere used in this connection; it is lit. "he cut into cuttings," or "portions"; in Gen. 15:17 the noun is used of the two halves of a sacrificed animal between which the two parties of a covenant passed. This covenant-rite, of great antiquity, must have been in the mind of the psalmist"

---Oesterley, op. cit., p. 544

PSALM 136 (cont.)

14. V: And made Israel to pass through the midst of it,
R: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER;
15. V: And cast Pharaoh and his host into Yam-suph,
R: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER;
16. V: Who led his people into the wilderness,
R: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER;
17. V: Who smote great nations,
R: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER;
18. V: And slew famous kings,
R: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER;
19. V: Sihon, king of the Amorites,
R: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER;
20. V: And Og, the king of Bashan,
R: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER;
21. V: And gave their land for an heritage,
R: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER;
22. V: An heritage to Israel, his servant,
R: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER;
23. V: Who in our abasement remembered us,
R: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER;
24. V: And rescued us from our oppressors,
R: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER;
25. V: He giveth food to all flesh,
R: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER;
26. V: Give thanks to the God of heaven,
R: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER.

PSALM 136

(Alternative arrangement)

This arrangement involves simply an omission of the historical references, vv. 10-24, incl. This omission not only gives a more logical progression to the psalm, but also gives it a more exalted tone.

1. V: Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good,
R: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER;
2. V: Give thanks to the God of gods,
R: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER;
3. V: Give thanks to the Lord of lords,
R: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER;
4. V: Who alone doeth wonder-works,
R: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER;
5. V: Who made the heavens with wisdom,
R: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER;
6. V: Who spread forth the earth on the waters,
R: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER;
7. V: Who made great lights,
R: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER;
8. V: The sun to rule by day,
R: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER;
9. V: The moon to rule by night,
R: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER;
25. V: He giveth food to all flesh,
R: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER;
26. V: Give thanks to the God of heaven,
R: FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER.

PSALM 137

1. V: By the waters of Babylon, there we sat
R: And wept at the thought of Zion!
2. V: There on the willows we hung up our harps,
3. R: When our captors asked for a song;
V: Those who had harried us bade us be merry,
R: "Sing to us songs of Zion," they said.
4. V: But how could we sing the Lord's songs
R: In a foreign land?
5. V: If I forget thee, Jerusalem,
R: May my right hand fail me;
6. V: May my tongue cleave to my palate,
R: If I remember thee not,
V: If I exalt not Jerusalem
R: Above my greatest joy.
7. V: Remember, O Lord, against the Edomites,
R: The day of Jerusalem!
V: They who said, "Raze it, raze it,
R: To its very foundations!"
8. V: O daughter of Babylon, thou devastater,
R: Blessed be he that requiteth thee,
9. V: Blessed be he that seizeth, and dasheth
R: Thy little ones against the rock!

Translations chiefly used: Oesterley, Moffatt, Smith.

PSALM 138

Though commentators differ in the interpretation of this psalm, the following exposition is offered as plausible and with a view to clarification. It is a poem of praise written by one in exile during the last months of the Babylonian Captivity. King Cyrus, the Persian, conqueror of the Babylonians, has already given his decree freeing the Jews to return to their homeland, and the psalmist is looking forward to the happy times to come. In the meantime the Babylonians are showing their contempt for the Jews in drastic ways, but wait! Yahweh will vindicate them, preserve them against the wrath of their enemies, and accomplish his design for them.*

1. V: O Lord, I give thanks to thee with all my heart,
R: Before the gods do I sing praise to thee.
2. V: I worship toward thy holy temple,
R: And give thanks to thy name for thy love,
V: For thou hast magnified thy Name,
R: And thy word above all things.
3. V: In the day that I called thou didst answer,
R: Didst increase strength in my soul.
4. V: All the kings of the earth shall praise thee,
R: When they hear the words of thy mouth;
5. V: Yea, they shall sing of the ways of the Lord,
R: That great is the glory of the Lord.
6. V: Exalted is the Lord, yet he considereth the lowly,
R: But the haughty he knoweth from afar.
7. V: Thou stretchest forth thine hand,
R: Thy right hand doth save me;
V: Though I walk in the midst of trouble,
R: Thou preservest me against the wrath of mine enemies;
8. V: The Lord will accomplish it for me;
R: O Lord, thy love is everlasting;
V: Forsake not the work of thine hands.

* Cf. Oesterley, op, cit., pp. 549 ff.

PSALM 139

1. V: O Lord, thou searchest me out, and knowest me:
2. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising,
R: Thou discernest my thoughts from afar;
3. V: My going and my resting thou dost sift,
R: Art familiar with all my ways;
4. V: For no word is there on my tongue,
R: But, Lord, thou knowest it altogether;
5. V: Behind and before thou dost encircle me,
R: And layest thine hand upon me.
6. V: Too wonderful for me is such knowledge,
R: Too high, I cannot attain unto it.
7. V: Whither should I go from thy spirit,
R: Whither should I flee from thy presence?
8. V: If I ascended to heaven--thou art there,
R: If I descended to Sheol, lo, thou art there,
9. V: If I took the wings of the dawn,
R: Or abode in the farthest sea,
10. V: Even there would thy hand rest upon me,
R: And thy right hand take hold of me;
11. V: If I said, "Surely darkness will cover me,
R: And night be a veil about me,"
12. V: Yet darkness would not darken from thee,
R: And night like day would give light!
14. V: I thank thee, for thou art awful,
R: Wonderful art thou--wonderful are thy works;
And my soul knoweth it right well.
13. V: For thou didst form my reins,
R: Didst knit me together in my mother's womb;
15. V: My frame was not hidden from thee
at the time I was fashioned in secret,
R: Skillfully wrought in the depths of the earth;
16. V: My doings did thine eyes behold,
R: In thy book my ways were inscribed;
V: All my days were numbered,
R: And not one was overlooked,
17. V: How inscrutable to me are thy thoughts,
R: O God, how great is their number!
18. V: Were I to count them, they would outnumber the sands!
R: I awake from my reverie, and am still lost in thee!
19. V: O God, that thou wouldst slay the wicked,
R: That the bloodthirsty men might depart,
20. V: That speak of thee in wickedness,
R: That take thy name in vain!
21. V: Do I not hate them that hate thee,
R: And loathe them that loathe thee!

PSALM 139 (cont.)

22. V: With utter hatred do I hate them,
R: As enemies are they to me.
23. V: Search me, O God, and know my heart,
R: Try me, and know my thoughts,
24. V: And see if there be any false way in me,
R: And lead me in the way everlasting.

PSALM 140

1. V: Deliver me, Lord, from evil men,
R: Preserve me from violent men;
2. V: They who harbour evil things in their heart,
R: Daily do they stir up quarrels;
3. V: They sharpen their tongue like a serpent,
R: Viper's venom is under their lips. Selah.
4. V: Keep me, Lord, from the hands of the wicked,
R: From the violent men preserve me;
V: They who purpose to trip up my feet,
5c. R: By the wayside have they set for me gins;
5. V: The proud have hidden a snare for me,
R: And the spoilers have laid a net. Selah.
6. V: And I said to the Lord: "My God art thou,
R: Hearken to the voice of my supplication;
7. V: O God, my Lord, my saving strength,
R: Who hast covered my head in the day of strife,
8. V: Grant not, Lord, the desires of the wicked,
R: That which they plan prosper not." Selah.
9. V: May they who surround me not lift up their head,
R: May the mischief of their lips overwhelm them; (Selah)
10. V: May coals of fire be shaken upon them,
R: May they fall into pits, and not rise again;
11. V: May the speaker of evil not be set up in the land,
R: May calamity pursue the violent man.
12. V: I know that the Lord will maintain
R: The cause of the oppressed, the right of the needy.
13. V: Of a truth the righteous shall give thanks to thy name,
R: The upright shall abide in thy presence.

PSALM 141

1. V: Lord, I cry unto thee, haste thee unto me,
R: Give ear to my voice when I call unto thee;
2. V: Let my prayer be set forth as incense before thee,
R: The lifting-up of my hands as an evening oblation;
3. V: Set, O Lord, a watch o'er my mouth,
R: A guard on the door of my lips;
4. V: Incline not my heart to aught that is evil,
R: To act shamelessly like the doings of the wicked.
V: I will not sit with them that do iniquity,
R: Nor will I partake of their dainties.
5. V: Let the righteous smite me, let the godly chastise me,
R: But the oil of the wicked let it not adorn my head.
8. V: As for me, O Lord, toward thee are mine eyes,
R: In thee do I trust, pour not out my soul;
9. V: Keep me from the snare they have laid for me,
R: And from the gins of the workers of iniquity.
10. V: May the wicked fall in their own nets,
R: While I altogether escape.

Note: Verses 5c to 7, incl., have suffered considerable corruption. Even with the suggested emendations of scholars they do not make adequate sense. They are probably a later insertion. (So think Moffatt and Oesterley.) In any case, the psalm is improved by their omission; so we have left them out.

PSALM 142

In this psalm a prisoner casts himself wholly upon the Lord.

1. V: With my voice to the Lord do I cry,
R: With my voice to the Lord do I make my supplication;
2. V: I pour out before him my complaint,
R: My trouble before him I recount;
3. V: When my spirit within me languished,
R: Thou didst know my fate;
V: In the way wherein I walked,
R: They hid a snare for me;
4. V: Look to my right hand, and see,
R: There is none that payeth heed to me;

PSALM 142 (cont.)

- V: Escape hath canished from me,
R: There is none that careth for me.
5. V: I cry unto thee, O Lord,
R: I say: Thou art my refuge,
My portion in the land of the living.
6. V: Give heed to my cry,
For I am brought very low;
R: Save me from my persecutors,
For they are too strong for me.
7. V: Bring me forth from prison,
R: That I may praise thy name;
V: Thy righteousness shall encompass me,
R: When thou shalt have prospered me.

PSALM 143

One of the penitential psalms. The rhythm is irregular; which may well be purposeful in order to reflect the worry of the writer's mind and his alternating thoughts. No other psalm so fully illustrates the writer's familiarity with the Psalter as a whole.

1. V: Hear my prayer,
Give ear to my supplication,
Answer me in thy righteousness.
2. Bring not thy servant into judgment,
R: For none living is righteous in thy sight.
3. V: But the enemy persecuteth my soul,
He crusheth my life to the ground,
He causeth me to dwell in dark places.
4. And my spirit fainteth within me,
R: My heart in the midst of me is desolate.
5. V: I recall the days of old,
I meditate on all thy doing,
I muse on the work of thine hands.
6. I spread forth mine hands unto thee,
R: My soul is toward thee as a thirsty land. Selah.
7. V: Speedily answer me,
My spirit faileth;
Hide not thy face from me,
R: Lest I be like them that descend to the Pit.
8. V: Let me hear of thy lovingkindness at morn,
R: For in thee do I trust;

PSALM 143 (cont.)

- V: Show me the way wherein I should walk,
R: For to thee do I lift up my soul;
9. V: Deliver ~~me~~ from my foes,
R: Unto thee do I flee.
10. V: Teach me to do thy will,
R: For thou art my God;
V: May thy good spirit lead me
R: In the path of uprightness;
11. V: For thy name's sake preserve me,
R: In thy righteousness bring forth
my soul from trouble;
12c. V: For I am thy servant.
-

Note: The edifying character of this psalm is marred by the note of vindictiveness in verse 12: "And of thy mercy annihilate mine enemies and destroy all that trouble my soul." Accordingly, we have omitted those lines in the above arrangement.

PSALM 144

This psalm presents difficulties. There have been some serious dislocations of text, probably due to the attempt of some scribe to construct a unity out of two originally independent psalms. The arrangement here set forth is, accordingly, tentative. Verse 11 may be a gloss; it is a doublet (see v. 8). Verses 3 and 4 are certainly glosses, disturbing the connection between verses 2 and 5. These verses (bracketed below) it would be best to leave out when reading the psalm in a worship service. Indeed, it would be quite as well to leave out the entire psalm, for, except for the closing verse, there is nothing very uplifting about it.

1. V: Blessed be the Lord, my Rock,
Who teacheth my hands to war,
R: And my fingers to fight;
2. V: My crag, my Stronghold,
R: My Fortalice and Deliverer,
V: The Shield behind whom I shelter,
R: The Subduer of nations before me!

PSALM 144 (cont.)

- (3. V: O Lord, what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him?
 R: Or the son of man, that thou considerest him?
 4. V: Man is like unto a breath,
 R: His days are as a shadow passing away.)
 5. V: Lord, bow thy heavens and come down,
 R: Touch the mountains that they may smoke,
 6. V: Flash forth lightnings, and scatter them,
 R: Shoot out thine arrows, and confound them.
 7. V: Put forth thine hand from above,
 R: Draw me out of many waters,
 V: Deliver me from the hand of strangers,
 8. R: Whose mouth speaketh vanity,
 And whose right hand is a lying right hand.
 9. V: A new song
 will I sing to thee,
 R: With a ten-stringed harp
 will I make melody to thee,
 10. V: Who giveth victory to his king,
 R: Who rescueth David his servant.
 11. V: Deliver me from the hand of strangers,
 R: Whose mouth speaketh vanity,
 And whose right hand is a lying right hand.

12. V: Our sons are like plants
 Well-grown in their borders;
 R: Our daughters like cornices
 Carved in a palace;
 13. V: Our garners supplying
 R: All manner of store;
 V: Our sheep are thousands,
 Ten thousands in our fields,
 14. R: Our oxen are heavily-laden;
 V: There is no riot and no alarm.
 R: No tumult in our broad places.
 15. V: Happy the people
 In such a case,
 R: Happy the people
 Whose God is the Lord!

PSALM 145

This triumphant hymn of praise, calling upon all men to glorify God, is one of the most inspiring in the Psalter. Although it is an acrostic (the last of such) it does not have the artificiality so characteristic of some of them. It is one of the latest psalms in the

It has been in use in the Liturgy of the Synagogue from very early times.*

1. VR: I will exalt thee, my God, the King,
I will bless thy name for ever.
2. V: Every day will I bless thee,
R: And will praise thy name for ever.
3. V: Great is the Lord, and highly to be praised,
R: His greatness is unsearchable.
4. V: Let one generation praise thy works to another,
R: And all of them declare thy mighty acts.
5. V: Of the majesty of thy glory, of thy splendour let them tell,
R: Of thy wonder-works let them sing;
6. V: Of the might of thy terrible deeds let them speak,
R: Of thy great acts let them discourse;
7. V: Let them publish the memory of thy great goodness,
R: Let them joyously proclaim thy righteousness.
8. V: The Lord is gracious and merciful,
R: Longsuffering and of great goodness;
9. V: The Lord is loving unto every man,
R: And his mercy is over all his works.
10. V: Let all thy works, Lord, give thee thanks,
R: And let thy godly ones bless thee
11. V: The glory of thy kingdom let them declare,
R: And let them talk of thy power,
12. V: To make known to men thy power,
R: And the glorious majesty of thy kingdom;
13. V: His kingdom is a kingdom of all ages,
R: And his rule throughout all generations.
V: (Faithful is the Lord in all his words,
R: And loving in all his works.) #
14. V: The Lord upholdeth all that fall,
R: And raiseth up all that are bowed down;
15. V: The eyes of all wait upon thee,
R: Thou givest their food in its time;
16. V: Thou thyself openest thine hand,
R: Satisfying all living with favour.

* Cf. Oesterley, op. cit., p. 572.

Following Oesterley and Moffatt, we have inserted this to supply a verse (Nun) that has fallen out of the text.

PSALM 145 (cont.)

17. V: Righteous is the Lord in all his ways,
R: And merciful in all his works;
18. V: Nigh is the Lord to all that call upon him,
R: To all that call upon him in truth;
19. V: The desire of them that fear him he fulfillleth,
R: Their cry he heareth, and helpeth them.
20. V: The Lord preserveth all that love him,
R: But all the wicked he destroyeth;
21. VR: The praise of the Lord shall my mouth utter,
And let all flesh bless his holy name.

PSALM 146

This is the first of the "Hallelujah" psalms, so called because they begin and conclude with this expression of praise. The others are Psalms 147-150. Together with the other four, this psalm has from very early times been sung daily at the morning synagogal service.

1. VR: Hallelujah!
Praise the Lord, O my soul!
2. V: I will praise the Lord while I live,
R: Will sing praise to my God while I have my being.
3. V: Trust not in ~~primes~~,
in the offspring of men,
R: In him is no help,
4. V: His spirit goeth forth,
he returneth to his earth,
R: In that selfsame day
his purposes perish.
5. V: Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob,
R: Whose hope is in the Lord his God,
6. V: Maker of heaven and earth,
R: The sea and all that in them is;
V: Who keepeth truth for ever,
7. R: Who upholdeth justice for the oppressed,
V: Who giveth food to the hungry,
R: The Lord setteth free the prisoners.
8. V: The Lord giveth sight to the blind,
R: The Lord raiseth up those bowed down,
9. V: The Lord preserveth strangers,
R: Orphan and widow he sustaineth;
8c. V: The Lord loveth the righteous,
9c. R: But the way of the wicked he perverteth.
10. V: The Lord reigneth for ever,
R: Thy God, O Zion, to ~~all~~ generations.
VR: Hallelujah!

PSALM 147

The Septaugint and the Vulgate make of this two psalms: vv. 1-11 and 12-20.

Metre 3: 3 throughout.

1. V: Hallelujah!
Praise the Lord, for well it is to laud him,
R: Our God, for praise is fitting.
2. V: The Lord buildeth up Jerusalem,
R: The dispersed of Israel he gathereth.
3. V: He healeth the broken in heart,
R: And bindeth up their wounds.
4. V: He telleth the number of the stars,
R: He calleth them all by names.
5. V: Great is our Lord, and mighty of strength,
R: Of his understanding there is no searching out.
6. V: The Lord upholdeth the afflicted,
R: He bringeth down the wicked to the ground.
7. V: Sing to the Lord with thanksgiving,
R: Sing praise to our God with harp.
8. V: He covereth the heavens with clouds,
R: And prepareth rain for the earth;
V: He causeth grass to grow on the mountains,
R: And herb for the service of man;
9. V: He giveth to the beast its food,
R: And to the young ravens that cry.
10. V: He delighteth not in the strength of the horse,
R: Nor taketh pleasure in the legs of a man.
11. V: The Lord showeth favour to them that fear him,
R: To them that hope for his love.
12. V: Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem,
R: Praise thy God, O Zion,
13. V: For he strengthened the bars of thy gates,
R: He blessed thy sons within thee;
14. V: He maketh thy borders peaceful,
R: He satisfieth thee with full-ripe wheat;
15. V: He sendeth forth his commandment upon earth,
R: Right swiftly runneth his word.
16. V: He giveth snow like wool,
R: He scattereth the hoar-frost like ashes;
17. V: He casteth forth his ice like morsels,
R: At his cold the waters stand still;
18. V: He sendeth out his word and melteth them,
R: Maketh his wind to blow--waters flow.
19. V: He declareth his word to Jacob,
R: His statutes and judgments to Israel;
20. V: Not thus hath he dealt with any nation,
R: Nor made known to them his judgments.
VR: Hallelujah!

PSALM 148

1. V: Hallelujah!
Praise the Lord from the heavens,
R: Praise him in the heights!
2. V: Praise him, all ye his angels,
R: Praise him, all ye his hosts!
3. V: Praise him, sun and moon,
R: Praise him, all ye stars of light!
4. V: Praise him, ye heavens of heavens,
R: And ye waters above the heavens!
5. V: Let them praise the name of the Lord,
R: For he commanded, and they were created;
6. V: And he hath established them forever and ever,
R: He hath made a decree which shall not pass.
7. V: Praise the Lord from the earth,
R: Ye dragons and all deeps!
8. V: Fire and hail,
Snow and vapour,
R: Stormy wind
Fulfilling his word!
9. V: Mountains and all hills,
R: Fruitful trees and all cedars!
10. V: Beasts and all cattle,
R: Creeping things and winged birds!
11. V: Kings of the earth and all peoples,
R: Princes and all judges of the earth!
12. V: Young men, yea also maidens,
R: Old men together with youths!
13. V: Let them praise the name of the Lord,
R: For his name alone is exalted,
V: His glory is above earth and heaven,
14. R: And he hath lifted up the horn of his people;
V: The praise is he of all his saints,
R: The sons of Israel, the people near him.
VR: Hallelujah!

PSALM 149

A bellicose psalm on the "Praise the Lord and pass the ammunition" theme. Evidently sung as a thanksgiving to God on the return of victorious warriors from combat.

1. V: Hallelujah!
Sing to the Lord a new song,
R: His praise in the assembly of the pious.
2. V: Let Israel rejoice in his Maker,
R: Let the sons of Zion be glad in their King;
3. V: Let them praise his name in dance,
R: With drums and harp let them sing to him.
4. V: For the Lord doth favour his people,
R: He adorneth the meek with victory.
5. V: Let the pious exult triumphantly,
R: Let them shout in endless joy,
6. V: High praises of God in their mouth,
R: And a two-edged sword in their hand,
7. V: To take vengeance upon the nations,
R: And reprisals against the peoples;
8. V: To bind their kings with chains,
R: And their princes with fetters of iron;
9. V: To fulfil the written decree,
R: Glory 'tis to all his pious ones.
VR: Hallelujah!

PSALM 150

Markedly fitting as a conclusion to the Psalter is this psalm with its oft-repeated exhortations to praise. In addition to being a sublime hymn, it is of interest in that it reveals several of the musical instruments used by the ancient Jews in connection with their worship. Oesterley regards this psalm as "the grandest symphony of praise to God ever composed on earth."*

1. V: Hallelujah!
Praise God in his sanctuary,
R: Praise him in his mighty firmament.
2. V: Praise him for his acts of power,
R: Praise him according to the abundance of his greatness.
3. V: Praise him with the blast of the ram's-horn,
R: Praise him with harp and lyre.
4. V: Praise him with drum and dance,
R: Praise him with strings and flute.
5. V: Praise him with resounding cymbals,
R: Praise him with clanging cymbals.
6. V: Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.
R: Hallelujah!

* Op. cit., p. 593

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